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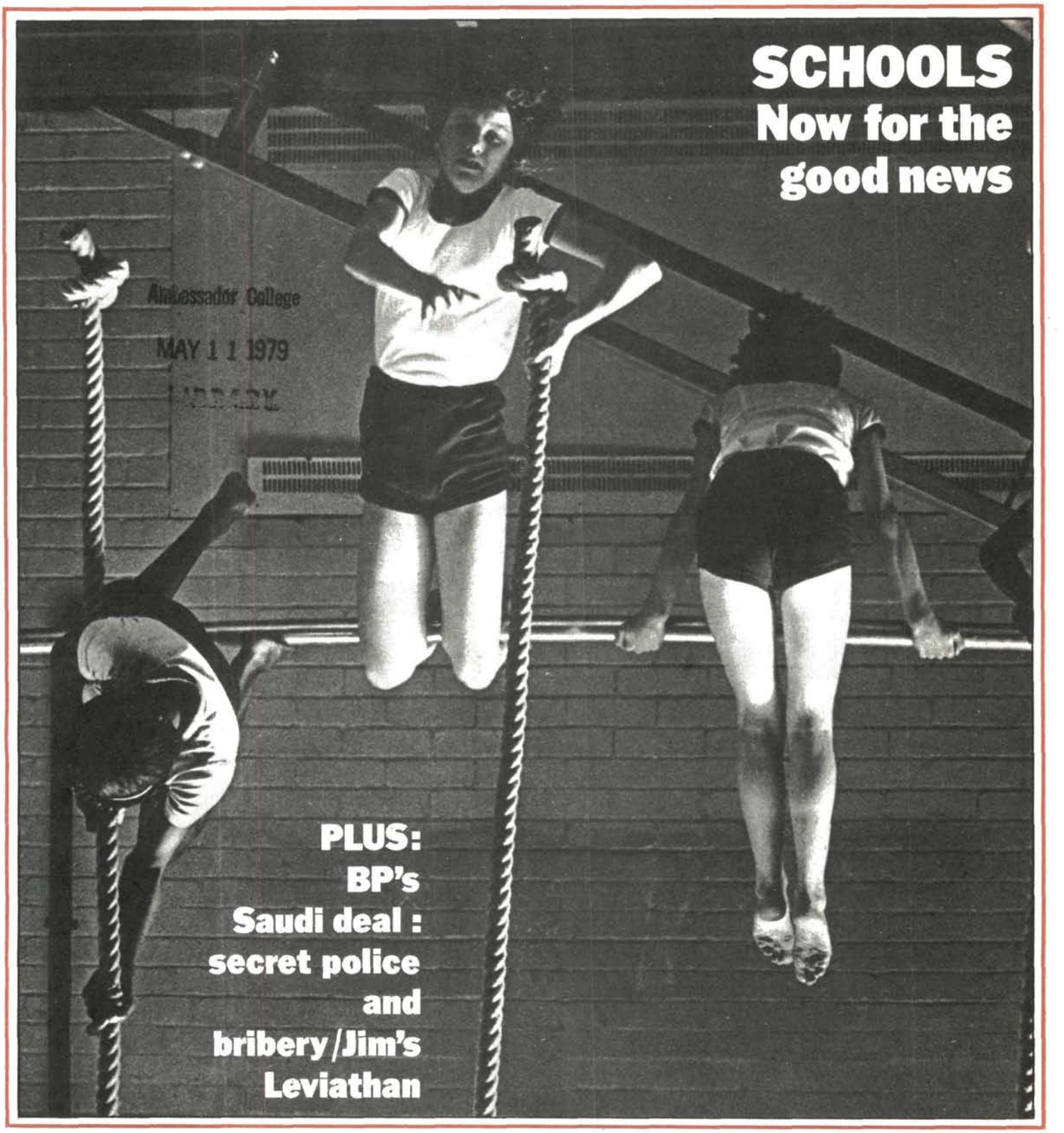

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Roy Mason: an honourable man

ROY MASON IS to be thoroughly congratulated on his decision to resign as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. Clearly, it was intolerable for a Labour politician of any shade to remain in office after the revelation of torture and brutality conducted by his subordinates. Not to have known that such things were going on would have revealed Mr Mason as incompetent – an accusation that has been, perhaps unfairly, levelled at him in the past. But to have admitted that he *did* know would have branded him as an objective accomplice and this, of course, was unthinkable to somebody of his rough-hewn Yorkshire decency. It is encouraging, after some of the harsh things that we have felt bound to say about this Cabinet, to find that the spark of principle and humanity is not entirely extinct.

It is not easy, even with the benefit of hindsight, to say at what point Mr Mason's final decision was taken. Was it when the first testimony of bestial treatment in Castlereagh barracks was published? Was it when it became apparent that even hardened RUC men had testified in private against some of their colleagues? Was it when Dr Robert Irwin, a Protestant physician of some standing, decided that he could remain silent no longer? Or was it when, in a crowning humiliation, it was left to Airey Neave to deplore the refusal of the security services to defend themselves on *Weekend World*? We incline to the view that these factors accumulated in Mr Mason's mind, but were precipitated into a resignation by the discovery of a 'dirty tricks' element in the Northern Ireland Office; an element so corrupted and deceitful that it attempted to smear Dr Irwin with a foul untruth about his wife. For a man of Roy Mason's stamp, this baseness must have been the final straw.

Indeed, throughout his term of office, Roy Mason was almost fastidious in his open and candid relationship with the press. Unlike some other ministers, and some former Ulster secretaries, he did not blame the press for the bad news, or confuse the messenger with the message. He understood the need for an informed public opinion, if Britain's long, expensive, bloody and bewildering commitment to the partition of Ireland was to be comprehended by voters and taxpayers. And, in private conversation as well as on public platforms, he displayed a striking sympathy with Irish aspirations and an impressive grasp of Irish history whether Catholic or Presbyterian.

His lack of partiality was evidenced just towards the end of his tenure. When a subordinate attacked the *Weekend World* disclosures on the ground that they did not stress IRA atrocities, Roy Mason was quick to rebuke the jack-in-office for daring to compare terrorist outrages with the expected conduct of uniformed policemen. He was also known to be troubled greatly by the number of Ulster Defence Regiment regulars who have been convicted of sectarian murders and maimings over the recent past. Roy Mason was not the sort of man who could let bigots shelter behind the Queen's uniform.

His resignation makes it more likely that the practice of bursting recalcitrant eardrums and snapping stubborn ribs will cease. Perhaps that will be his niche in history; the niche of the man who learnt humbly, from the awful centuries of Anglo-Irish bitterness, that repression is not a policy. From his retirement, Mr Mason will be able to contemplate this reform with a forgivable twinge of pride. He has learned for himself, and taught to the rest of us, the simple truth of the old saying that 'what the English can never remember, the Irish can never forget'.

NOTES

Electric shocks

Peter Stothard writes: Last week's decision by the Price Commission to freeze the electricity price rise for three months has met with a hostile response from Whitehall, where plans were already advanced for a second rise later in the year in the prices of both coal and electricity. The Treasury officials' main aim ahead of the budget is to ensure that the estimate of the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement is as close as possible to the £8.5 billion prediction in January's Public Spending White Paper. Their chief problem has been a sharp rise in the nationalised industries' spending requirements in the last two months – the National Coal Board in particular needs £200 million to finance the miners' new productivity deal.

The Treasury argues that the double price rise would help the electricity industry keep within its financial target for the year but unfortunately the Price Commission does not recognise the achievement of such government imposed targets as a good enough reason for putting up prices; chairman Charles Williams thinks *he* should decide such targets. He coolly told Prices Minister Roy Hattersley that any attempt to overrule the Commission's investigation would bring mass resignations from the Commission. Ministers know what that could mean in the run up to the election and allowed Williams his way.

This glaring contradiction between the government's nationalised industry policy and its prices policy was foreseen when the Price Commission was set up. Under a compromise formula, the industries fell in the Commission's orbit but it was agreed that 'Mr Hattersley would, where necessary, draw Mr Williams's attention to the existence of the targets.' Now that such attention has been drawn, but not held, ministers have only a week to decide what to do. Despite the displeasure of the nationalised industries' chairmen with what has happened, the betting is for a second coal price rise (which feeds through into electricity prices) and a cosmetic squeezing of the other industries' borrowing estimates.

The Treasury has other problems with the nationalised industries: it has lost its battle in cabinet committee GEN 86 to prevent the extension of industrial democracy to the nationalised industries. As things stand at the moment departmental ministers have the ultimate power to appoint board members. Albert Booth and Tony Benn have argued that the public sector workers should have the same rights as private sector workers under the watered down industrial democracy White Paper, produced under the compromising skills of Mrs Shirley Williams. These skills devised another compromise for the nationalised industries under which consultative bodies would submit a list of board candidates to the relevant minister before election; unacceptable names could be struck off without too greatly offending democratic principles.

This scheme held the day only so long as Edmund Dell was around. He supported the status quo and was worried, for example, over having to ratify a member of the Communist Party on his election to the Post Office board. Whether Callaghan intended it or not, Dell's replacement, John Smith, has sided with Benn and Booth, whose view has now carried the day and is before the Cabinet, where Chancellor Denis Healey, who is not on GEN 86, has the job of fighting to hold on to Whitehall's control over the nationalised industries.

Times to come

Patrick Wintour writes: There is something of the fraudulent air of euphoria associated with Camp David about Albert Booth's peace formula for Times Newspapers: it is only an agreement to have talks and for the management to re-engage until 17 April those people that have already been dismissed. None of the original points at issue on manning, disputes procedures and new technology – have been settled but NGA officials are confident that they will win a final climbdown on their right to control all keystroking of copy into the computer. NGA victories elsewhere, notably at the *Express*, have left Times management isolated.

Nevertheless, many chapel fathers feel betrayed by their general secretaries and have been advising against accepting re-engagement. Natsopa officials however have been present at every meeting of the chapels and have pressed heavily for acceptance. The majority of the 30 chapels still in dispute with TNL have, by tiny majorities, taken their national rather than chapel advice. The main exception has been the large *Sunday Times* clerical chapel. But other chapel acceptances have been qualified.

The FOCs' fear is that the NGA and Natsopa executives endorsed the Booth deal before looking at the implication of the employment legislation minefield. TNL by contrast have been taking expert legal and management consultant advice on ways of avoiding the redundancy and unfair dismissal payments which might cost them £2m.

The employees who were dismissed (1,700 before March 9 and 1,400 whose notice expired on that day) have been offered re-engagement on a fixed short-term contract; they are not being reinstated on their old terms. If no agreement is reached by 17 April they can all be sacked at one go without a period of notice. Since many Natsopa members have been found jobs elsewhere, being offered re-employment on those terms is not over-attractive. The real pitfall though is the law, which says that if you are dismissed and offered re-engagement with a slightly different job before your notice expires and that then, after a 4 week trial period at this job, you unreasonably refuse the new contract, you automatically lose your rights to any redundancy money. This may have been at the back of TNL's mind but, unfortunately for them, they did not offer re-engagement before the end of the old contract. They tried to cover this difficulty by conveniently marking the letter offering re-engagement 'March' but not dating it.

Other problems remain for the unions; whether to continue with unfair dismissal claims (they are running out of time before the claims must be lodged) and whether to agree to return to work even if four Natsopa members who were sacked for refusing to cover for another dismissed worker are not reinstated. Management say the four will never be asked back but, that if they were, 12 middle managers would resign in protest. Finally, Peter Hillmore's freedom to report the *Times* dispute in the *Guardian* has been ended by his editor. It is deemed too risky since the *Guardian* hope to restart printing at *The Times* in two weeks.

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The battle of Edge Hill

Toby Pygge writes: 'The problem with the Liverpool Labour Party,' a colleague once explained, 'is that all the Leftists are card-carrying members of Everton Football Club. And if that's an example of their judgment how can you possibly trust them?' Bob Wareing, Labour candidate in next Thursday's by-election at Liverpool Edge Hill, was even more chirpy than usual last Wednesday after his team had stolen a point from Anfield the previous evening, seeing it as an omen that his judgment on other matters would soon be proved right as well.

The Liberal candidate, David Alton, is also sniffing the scent of victory, but whether his ebullience continues after the campaign rests with 5,000 voters who have deserted the constituency since the last general election. With an electorate of 41,000 in October 1974, Edge Hill already boasted one of the smallest constituencies in the country; today the number of eligible voters has dropped dramatically to little over 36,000. With the bulk of the fall explained by what they describe in Liverpool as 'dehousing' (i.e. from tenement blocks to individual houses), the likelihood is that most of the missing voters were Labour supporters.

It is not only this fall in the Labour vote which has the Liberals so excited, nor even the fact that they have twice polled second place in recent general elections here. What makes them so confident is the steady gains they have made in local elections over the past five years. On the city council 11 out of the 12 Edge Hill seats are in Liberal hands, while on the county council they hold three out of four.

As housing chairman for the city council, David Alton stands exposed to criticism, and Labour's main plank during the campaign has been an attack on Liberal housing policies. 'How can you advocate the sale of council housing when the city is crying out for more council homes?' argues Bob Wareing. 'What we need to do is regenerate the city centre and that can only be done with more houses and more jobs.'

Censorship at IPC

Francis Wheen writes: Today's issues of *New Society* and *New Scientist* carry signed editorials criticising their proprietors, IPC Magazines Ltd. 'The internal politics of IPC Magazines Ltd are probably of no interest to most of our readers,' writes Dr Bernard Dixon, editor of *New Scientist*. 'But readers and advertisers may be concerned to know . . . that decisions about access to the columns of two weekly organs of opinion can now be taken corporately without reference to their editors.'

The IPC censorship saga began last September, when the Legalise Cannabis Campaign (LCC) booked a full-page advertisement in *New Musical Express* to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the outlawing of cannabis in Britain. Mr Edward Court, chairman and chief executive of IPC Magazines, wrote to the LCC that 'we are not prepared to accept advertisements from your organisation in our publications.'

Nevertheless, in January this year the LCC sought to place an advertisement in *New Scientist* and *New Society*, whose editors saw no reason not to publish it (it offended neither public decency, the law, nor the Code of Advertising Practice); but IPC's Mr Court remained adamant. 'We are concerned primarily with the effect on young people,' he said last week. 'The environment in which young people are encouraged to take cannabis is one in which they might lead on to other drugs.' In a letter to Lord Avebury he added: 'Neither do we accept alcoholic advertising in publications appealing to young people.' The following points should be borne in mind by readers anxious to assess the moral purity of Mr Court's ratiocination: the ban applies to *all* IPC magazines – from *Country Life* to *Whizzer and Chips* – and not simply those appealing to young people; the offending advertisements did *not* encourage young people to take cannabis, but simply asked them to campaign for law reform; and the statement about alcoholic advertising is not borne out by *New Scientist*, for example, which has often carried such advertising and which has a circulation of over 15,000 among schoolchildren. Paul Barker of *New Society* points out that the fact that his magazine has advocated change in the drugs laws is irrelevant to the advertising ban. But it increases the irony: the sponsors of the Legalise Cannabis Campaign include at least six contributors to *New Society*.

Hussein's friend

Ian Black writes: King Hussein of Jordan is at centre stage again. Last Saturday PLO chief Yasser Arafat called on him to discuss Sadat's agreement with 'the Zionist enemy' and on Sunday Zbigniew Brzezinski dropped in to try and persuade the king to go along with Camp David.

Brzezinski went away disappointed while Arafat heaped praises on the king.

Since the *rapprochement* between Jordan and the PLO began in earnest last September, two major issues have repeatedly emerged as serious barriers to a substantial improvement in relations between the two sides. On the first – the demand by some of the PLO's component groups that Hussein allow them to launch raids against Israel from his territory – little change should be expected. The PLO leader takes at face value the king's vow that he will never again permit a Palestinian military presence on Jordanian soil. But here Arafat faces strong opposition from his enemies inside the Palestinian umbrella organisation – notably from George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Nayif Hawatmeh's powerful DFLP.

On the other sticking point – the disbursement of a 30 million dollar fund allotted to the occupied territories after the rejectionist Baghdad summit – it seems that Hussein and Arafat may have reached agreement. If this has happened – and the effusive joint communique suggests that it has – then it will mark a significant departure in PLO-Jordanian relations as well as a marked shift by Hussein into the rejectionist camp.

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BP sets up Saudi secret police

A BP subsidiary has bribed its way into selling computers in Saudi Arabia, paying at least £5 million to win business from the Saudis' General Intelligence Department. DUNCAN CAMPBELL uncovers the secrets of 'Project S'.

AFTER THE FALL of the Shah of Iran, feudally governed Saudi Arabia is widely canvassed as the vital western client state of the Middle East. The hold on power of the ruling Royal House of Saud is no more certain, or historically tenable, than the Shah's, and its concern for its own security — always a major factor — is now paramount. For three years, a multinational British computer company, based in London, Hamburg and Riyadh, has been working to provide one means of maintaining the present political straitjacket on Saudi citizens and the immigrants on whom they depend. Documents obtained in a joint investigation with *Stern* magazine of Hamburg make clear the plans for the new system, and the secret police force it will serve. Our investigation has also uncovered bribery payments enormous even by the standards of the Arabian peninsula.

During 1980, twin computer centres in the principal Saudi cities, Riyadh and Jeddah, will start full operations. Officials of the little known General Intelligence Department (GID) will make use of the system. As they switch on their video screens, they will be greeted by the message: 'In the Name of Allah the Merciful the Beneficent – Welcome!' They will then obtain access to entirely secular files on the political and business activities of (potentially) a million people in Saudi Arabia and abroad. They will also call up 'Surveillance Lists' and 'Black Lists' of foreign and Saudi citizens, and take appropriate 'executive' action, including harassment, arrest, covert surveillance, and interrogation.

The architects of the new system are the aptly named Scientific Control Systems (Scicon), a computing subsidiary of BP. Their contract with GID – known only cryptically as Project S – was signed late in 1975. According to BP, Scicon have by now paid middlemen at least £5 million for this and other contracts in Saudi Arabia. In at least one case the 'commission' was as high as 40 per cent. At least some of the money, BP admits, reached a 'government official' involved in awarding government contracts to Scicon. A former Scicon manager has admitted to the NEW STATESMAN that much of the commission payments would go in bribes – which are 'not illegal' in Saudi Arabia, both he and BP contend. Scicon naturally also sought to make a substantial profit after considering all the risks. It is therefore unsurprising that the equipment supplied to the Saudis cost considerably less than they are due to pay.

By 1981, 27 computer-linked Branch Offices of the GID – located at airports, frontier posts, industrial centres and major towns – will be connected over scrambled radio links to the GID computer centre, in Riyadh or Jeddah. They will feed into the computer intelligence reports from a network of informants and agents, and obtain, on request, profile dossiers on any named individual. Superficially at least, the project is similar to Britain's Police National Computer, and other projects elsewhere. But it will store far more data from informants and secret surveillance than a police computer, and it will be used for a wider range of activities than simple arrests. It is, moreover, solely for the use of the military and security officials who staff the Branch Offices of the GID, not for the civil police. Among targets of particular concern are immigrant workers, particularly from adjacent North Yemen, foreign visitors, and – above all – the annual three quarters of a million visitors to the Holy Cities for the *Haj*, the annual Moslem pilgrimage to Mecca. The computer will record entry and exit times for pilgrims and visitors, and alert security officials if anyone is found to be on the Black List or on the estimated 14,000-strong Surveillance List. GID officials have told Scicon that about 500 of the Surveillance List targets will have non-Arabic names, ie may be Europeans.

Defence Ministers Fred Mulley and Saudi Prince Sultan; making the most of Saudi arms sales.

An unhealthy mixture of business and government

SCICON'S £24 MILLION contract, signed in November 1975, is believed to be the largest single contract ever awarded to any European computer company. The deal was negotiated with GID, headed formally at that time by Sheikh Omar Shamz, a veteran civil servant who has now retired. But a strong hold over the intelligence machinery was also held by a businessman of Turkish descent, Kamal Adham. As a royal adviser, Adham had particular responsibility for security matters.

Adham's connections with intelligence go further and deeper than organising GID, which was set up in 1963. According to the New York magazine *Seven Days*, he acted during the 1960s as the conduit for massive covert CIA payments to Anwar Sadat, totalling (at least) hundreds of thousands of dollars. The payments started before Sadat became President. Adham's business activities – including *inter alia* representing Rolls-Royce – have caused growing concern, since his two jobs did not satisfactorily mix. Matters came to a head when he concealed information from the Saudi princes on Sadat's intended trip to Jerusalem; the first they heard of it was on foreign radio broadcasts. Adham's sudden dismissal as a royal adviser was announced with unusual publicity early this year.

GID is now headed by his nephew and protegé Prince Turki bin Feisal, the late King's son. Turki's accession was announced in September 1977, one of the few public references the Saudis have made to their secret police. GID has not achieved the worldwide notoriety – nor yet it seems, the wholesale barbarity – of its late sister service, SAVAK. But it is undoubtedly treading SAVAK's road, with perhaps the same eventual consequences for the Saudi aristocracy. When Saudi deputy Prime Minister Crown Prince Fahd visited Washington early in 1977, the first item on the agenda for his discussions with Carter was the security of the royal family. American advisers soon followed. Links with the CIA, traditionally close, were bolstered in that December when the CIA's Saudi Arabian station chief joined Kamal Adham as his deputy. The CIA man, Raymond Close, had already occupied the CIA post in Riyadh for six years. Saudi concern about security and secrecy is manifest everywhere. No details of even Prince Turki bin Feisal can be found in the semi-official *Who's Who's in Saudi Arabia,* despite his importance as a royal prince and ministerial official.

Inside the Saudi General Intelligence Department

SCICON DOCUMENTS examined in our investigation have enabled us to draw a comprehensive picture of GID, never before fully described. Its operational activities at the twin headquarters of Riyadh and Jeddah are organised in three main divisions: 'Political Affairs', responsible for overseas intelligence; 'Secret Affairs', responsible for internal security activities; and a 'Secretariat', which, among other responsibilities, appears to liaise with foreign intelligence services such as the CIA and the British SIS.

The 'Political Affairs' overseas intelligence division is mostly concerned with other Middle Eastern countries, and in particular with Saudi Arabia's Arab partners. The biggest target of its intelligence activities is, nevertheless, Israel. Four other sections are responsible for South East Asia, Africa, the West, and the Eastern Bloc. The division is normally based in Jeddah.

The powerful 'Secret Affairs' division is responsible for GID's internal security activities. It maintains close links with the 27 military controlled Branch Offices (see map). Lists of incoming visitors at air and sea ports, and hotel residents, are sent daily to the 'Interior Section', which normally should check 3000 names a day. During the *Haj* pilgrimage, some 30,000 names must be checked daily. This is a key reason why the Saudis – who nervously eye the annual army of holy pilgrims – wanted a computer to keep tabs on them. The 'Interior Section' is also responsible, according to GID organisation charts, for surveillance of students and teachers, government employees, local news agencies, resident foreigners and 'illegal local political action groups'. Since no democracy of any sort is even pretended to exist in Saudi Arabia, political parties can have no legality.

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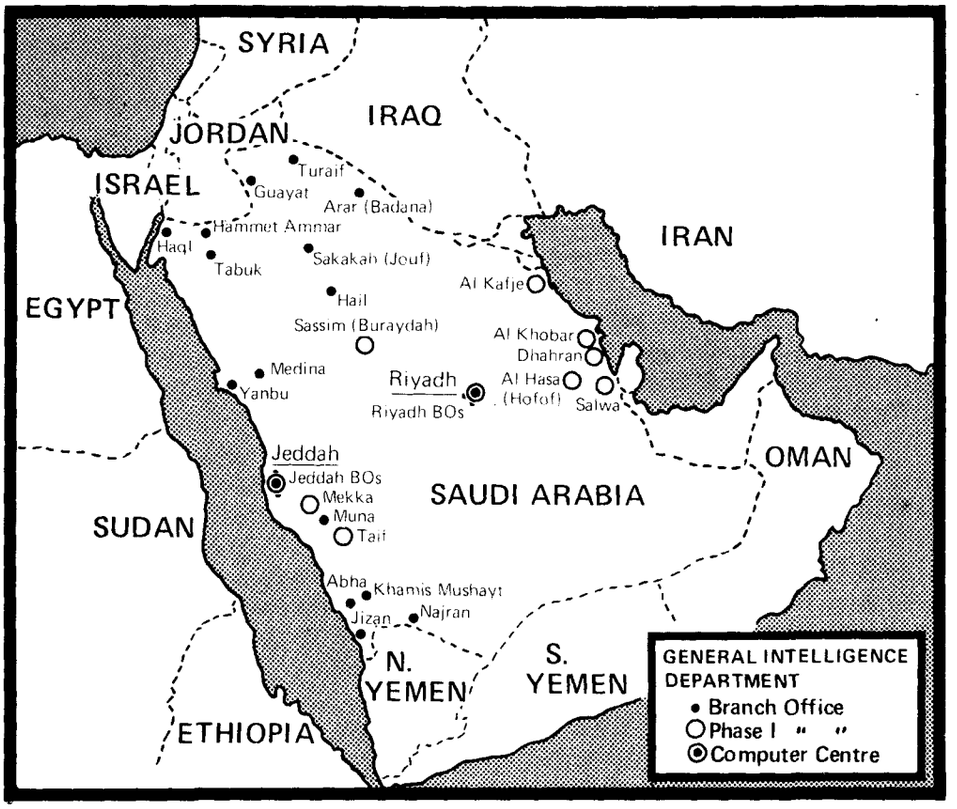

A more sensitive 'Counter-Intelligence' section is responsible for internal activities affecting the non-Arab world. This section has recently been headed by Adnan Saleh, a powerful non aristocrat who is the Saudi's manager of Scicon's Project S. GID's new Central Information Division will come under his control. The Counter Intelligence section prepares the Blacklist, and maintains watch on foreign embassies, news agencies and journalists. In this section are groups responsible for scrutinising the domestic and overseas press, and operations against 'parties and organisations opposing Saudi interests in the Arabian Gulf'. This can include foreign political and intelligence organisations. The files of both these sections are among the top priorities for the 'Project S' computers.

Two other sections of the 'Secret Affairs' division provide essential security services for the Saud regime. The euphemistically entitled 'Productivity Section' opens mail and taps telephones, monitors radio transmissions, and carries out what the FBI call 'black bag jobs': illegal breaking and entering, and bugging operations. The section also administers undercover agents. The 'Security Operations' section provides weapons, transport, couriers and 'interrogates' prisoners handed over to GID.

The Secretariat provides the GID with experts and translators, and maintains specialists in codes and cyphers. The security and secrecy of their communications have long been of concern to the Saudis. They are aware that, during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the Israelis as well as the major powers cracked their secure communications systems. It was their search for advanced electronics to protect their secrets that first lead them to Scicon.

BP's 'irregular payments' come to light

IRONICALLY, PROJECT S is completely different in character from Scicon's first move in Saudi Arabia. Its first contract – for which it had to pay 10 to 20 per cent in bribes – was for a medical computing system for the King Feisal Hospital in Riyadh, a specialist hospital intended as a glittering showpiece of modern medical technology. The hospital has been completed, but lies scarcely used – doing useful health work only in its maternity wing.

The hospital plan was originally drawn up by architect John Poulson and Dr Ken Williams, who headed Vickers Medical Group, the original contractors. After Poulson's financial empire collapsed, and Vickers pulled out, Williams took a job as medical adviser to the Saudi royal cabinet office. Scicon entered the scene originally as sub-contractors to drug firm G. D. Searle, with both companies agreeing to pay 10 per cent to a Beirut agent, Rizk I Rizk. When Searle learned that another 10 per cent was due to be paid to a Lichtenstein firm of 'consultants', Assem Etablissement, they pulled out – but Scicon, eager for Middle East business, signed up in Searle's place, supplying not only the computer system but also hospital fittings. Their 1972 contract provided for 10 per cent each to be paid to Rizk and Assem, although Assem at least supplied 'no services' at all.

This whole sordid arrangement came to light in 1977, when Scicon's parent BP had to appear before the US Securities and Exchange commission (SEC). After a year long discussion of BP's irregular payments – notably £800,000 to Italian politicians – they were required publicly to file details of irregular overseas payments. The documents, handed over in June 1977, appear to have been designed to be as incomprehensible as possible. Until now, no-one has apparently comprehended from the document that BP's Scicon subsidiary (whose name is in fact omitted but can readily be deduced) had, by December 1976, handed over payments in Saudi Arabia approaching £5 million.

Apart from the Lichtenstein company, which the report reveals was given almost £283,000, two other agents have had Scicon cash. Rizk, who creamed off 10 per cent of the hospital contract, was signed up in 1973 to represent Scicon in Saudi Arabia. He was involved in at least two further deals, involving the supply of communications equipment.

A second agent, the Arab Electronic Projects Establishment (AEPE) was taken on in 1974, during Project S negotiations. BP told the SEC that they believed this company (whose name was again omitted but has been supplied by former Scicon employees) was controlled and owned by a 'government official'. The same man – who is probably a leading royal prince – also received 'portions' of the money paid to Rizk (see diagram). The rest of Rizk's percentage, according to a businessman whose company dealt with him, was distributed in part to 'the royal family and Saudi generals'.

AEPE were promised 20 per cent on any deal, with a premium 30 per cent on spare parts and maintenance. On Project S therefore, at least £4.8 million could be expected to go to the government official's company. Rizk, after negotiating an earlier contract called Project E where kickbacks reached 40 per cent, was eased out and his share reduced to 3 per cent. On Project S, that would still be worth £720,000 – making a total 'commission' of over £5½ million.

The BP report confirms that, by the end of 1976, commission payments were approaching £5 million, out of sales receipts approaching £20 million. The 'commissions' appear to average 25 per cent. BP claims that most of the payments were made with the government's 'consent', and in consequence were neither 'improper nor illegal'. They do not say this about payments to Assem; which is unsurprising in view of the behaviour of one Dr Rifat Al-Sayeed Ali, the hospital minister in the royal cabinet office who arranged the Feisal hospital contract. It was Rifat and his adviser Williams who required the 10 per cent payment to Assem; and Rifat who, amongst others, reputedly received the payoff. After the SEC investigations, he fled from Riyadh in 1977. Williams also disappeared, having earlier used his residence in Saudi to resist British police enquiries into the Poulson affair.

Scicon's eagerness to move into Saudi Arabia may have burnt their fingers. The Saudi government refused to pay the final 20 per cent of the £3.75 million Feisal hospital contract, wiping out the hoped-for £250,000 profit. They may hope that Project S will at least recoup these losses.

Is Scicon giving Saudi value for money?

PROJECT S WAS Scicon's and the British computer industry's largest ever contract. To some it might well be thought to merit continued moral corner cutting. On the road to Project S were at least two other contracts. Through its agents and aided by the authority and prestige of BP, Scicon persuaded the Saudis that they could supply the necessary secret communications equipment to replace that which was no longer secure from the Israelis. By early 1974, they had secured contracts including the £900,000 'Project E' – the equipping of almost 40 overseas embassies, including London, with radio and cryptographic equipment, to pass secret messages to and from the Riyadh Foreign Ministry.

BUT SCICON couldn't make, and wasn't in the business of selling, such special cryptographic equipment. They turned to another

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British company with a now chequered history, Fairey Electronics. Scicon obtained an agency to sell the Fairey voice and telegraph scramblers. The usual price hikes were agreed for Arabian operations. Scicon would mark up the price 'within reason' – at least 20 per cent.

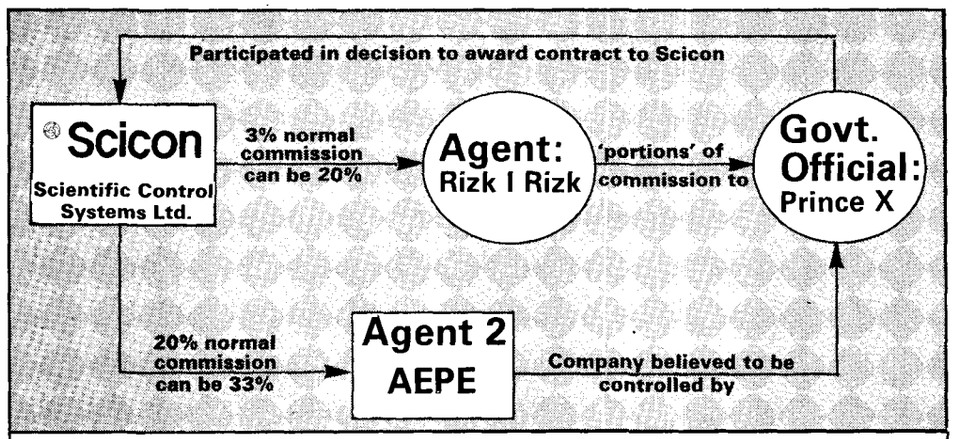
It was not an entirely satisfactory partnership; Fairey Electronics, a young offshoot of the engineering group, were sold off in 1977 when the group went bust. Telephone scramblers wanted in January 1975 were still being tested 18 months later. The Project E 'commission' payment of 40 per cent, negotiated by Scicon's then managing director Jim Brennan, also caused problems. According to company sources, Scicon never obtained a satisfactory explanation for the enormous kickback percentage.

But the continuing liaison with GID eventually paid off handsomely. By 1976, computer system analysts were studying GID activities to try and streamline them, and 40 programmers were transferred to the work in Hamburg, London and Riyadh. For the last three years, the secret Saudi system has been the major activity of Scicon's International subsidiary, based at Heathcoat House in fashionable Savile Row. The Project S computer for Jeddah is still installed there. The ample Arabian cash has been used to develop special bilingual English/Arabic printers and video display units (VDUs), as well as a device called 'SPARQ' for sending computer data by radio across Saudi Arabia's vast deserts. Each of these developments, although entirely paid for by the secret Project S funds, is now being offered for commercial sale. Not least of these lucrative 'spinoffs', Scicon hopes, is that other Arab countries – leaving aside Iran – may care for a Project S of their own.

PROSPECTIVE NEW CUSTOMERS may not be attracted by some features of the Scicon approach. Among the most curious is the sale of two entire computer systems to GID – only one of which will operate at any time, while the other gathers dust. The ostensible reason for this is that much of GID treks across Saudi Arabia twice every year – once for the *Haj,* and once again in the summer, when the royal family move to the cooler heights of the western resort of Taif. GID stays close to the centre of power by transferring to its Jeddah offices from Riyadh. The move involves activities most security organisations would find absurd as well as highly dangerous. Paper files, computer tapes, and personnel all travel, apparently, in convoy across the desert roads.

The simple solution to this problem would be to have only one computer, and a reliable communications link between Riyadh and Jeddah, the two centres. Scicon's Project S nevertheless has two computers – meaning that the GID is unlikely to operate effectively while computer files are being transferred from one HQ to the other. A Scicon document seen by *Stern* and the NEW STATESMAN notes that 'we are unable (or unwilling) to provide a fast communications link'. Although, the document continues, the link would solve the 'co-ordination problem', inconveniently it 'would probably make the second centre redundant'.

It is not the only questionable feature of the system. One of its major uses is for quickly locating detailed information in intelligence reports. Trial runs of the computer system show that it does this in a manner most


Participated in decision to award contract to Scicon
Scicon
Scientific Control Systems Ltd.
3% normal commission can be 20%
Agent: Rizk I Rizk
'portions' of commission to
Govt. Official: Prince X
20% normal commission can be 33%
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Company believed to be controlled by

How the kickbacks worked. BP's submission to the US SEC provided these details of Scicon's agent's dealings in Saudi Arabia.

western police or security forces would regard as out of date; for example, to identify references to the PLO – a major target of Saudi intelligence – the computer must also look for references to the title as 'P.L.O.', 'P L O', and 'Palestinian Liberation Organisation'. The new cypher and scrambling equipment is also unlikely to give full satisfaction. It may not have been pointed out to GID that British law prohibits the export of any cryptographic equipment unless specifically approved by the government. In this case all licences are checked by Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), the monitoring and codebreaking agency based in Cheltenham.

For the Saudis to believe that their codes were secure, it would be necessary for them to rely almost entirely on trust, since comprehension of the security of modern electronic cyphers is almost exclusively the province of algebra PhDs. And for anyone to believe that GCHQ would allow the export of cypher equipment that neither they – nor their US equivalent, the NSA – could break, would stretch trust well beyond naïveté. No-one save our very closest NATO allies enjoys that privilege, a fact admitted privately by British cypher equipment salesmen.

THE FILES OF THE GID have been growing fast, and may be expected to grow even faster as the Saudi princes become alarmed about radical influences. In 1975 alone, the dossiers grew by about 50 per cent to cover almost 200,000 people. The records include full personal information, a detailed description with passport numbers and dates of entry and exit. They also include 'ethnic origin', an indication of a Saudi's tribe or, if foreign, whether the person is Jewish, black, and so on. Other entries note 'memberships' of political or business organisations, '(presumably political) tendencies', and the person's status, if any on the 'Blacklist' or 'Surveillance List'. A 'grade' indicates the attention to be given – ranging from 'arrest on sight' to overt harassment or covert surveillance, and 'normal reports through informants'. The Surveillance List even covers people who are abroad.

Three further sets of dossiers will be maintained by GID's Central Information Division which will run the computer. These cover 'Organisations' – such as the PLO; 'Events' – such as the burning of a Jerusalem mosque; and 'Topics'. The computer can hold about a million dossiers of all types. Also recorded are a possible ten million Intelligence Reports filed by agents, civil and military officials, and informants. The nine Project S computers, made by the US Digital Equipment Corporation, will crosslink the reports to relevant dossiers for use by GID's 'executive arm'. Video display units installed in each headquarters, and throughout the country, will enable the GID officials quickly to crosscheck information, and refer if need be to more extensive reports which will still be held on paper. Although many experienced visitors to Saudi Arabia doubt whether a sufficient number of capable native Saudis can ever be found to run the military and security apparatus the princes would like, there is not much doubt that it will provide another turn of the screw against the pitiful civil liberties of Saudi citizens. Details of the barbaric punishments administered under the Saudi version of Islamic law need no repetition here.

IT IS DIFFICULT to see, notwithstanding the commission payments, how Scicon can justify the remark – made in the *Financial Times* after the signing of the contract – that about £12 million of the funds would be spent on 'equipment'. Company documents obtained by the NEW STATESMAN show that the computer equipment and ancilliaries cost around £2 million. A new prefabricated computer building was provided in Riyadh, and a substantial contract for radio links to Branch Offices given to Racal. Our estimates suggest – and company sources unofficially confirm – that Scicon aimed for a profit of at least 30 per cent of the real value of the contract, after commissions were paid. This would be over £4 million, an adequate bounty.

Such activities as Project S have not gone entirely unnoticed by Saudi watchers. In 1976, in a special supplement in *The Times,* one writer noted that computer companies operating in the country were 'cashing in while the going was good, selling them any old rubbish regardless of need and taking advantage of Saudi ignorance'. To this, the managing director of Scicon, Norman Lingard, riposted to *Computing* magazine that the system, about which he could 'reveal no details', was 'sophisticated technology geared to the real needs of the country'.

Lingard, who has left Scicon, now takes a different view of the Arabs' ability to handle 'sophisticated technology': 'Arabs and computing do not work', he said. Nonetheless, Project S remains, perhaps intended to succour the 'real needs' of wealthy princes, but unlikely to afford them better service than western technocracy gave the Shah of Iran.

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Why won't the English mend their houses?

Corin Hughes Stanton writes: When organisations like the National Federation of Building Trades and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors press the government to increase house improvement grants, it might seem that they are merely grinding their own special axe. The reality, however, is that the government's house condition survey puts the capital sum needed for repairs and the installation of basic amenities at a walloping £9,350 million in England alone – most of it in the private sector. Local authority homes are generally in a better state of repair.

Nearly 11 per cent of the entire housing stock in England is still unfit or lacks basic amenities, and another 9 per cent needs repairs and proper maintenance. While the number of unfit dwellings has declined to 794,000, since 1961 buildings have become unfit at the rate of 63,000 a year. At the same time there has been a considerable increase in the number of homes in substantial disrepair. There are still 1.4 million households without basic amenities, consisting mainly of old people living in the private sector.

It is hardly surprising that 13 major housing organisations, together with the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, are urging 75 per cent grants for basic amenities (90 per cent in cases of hardship) and are opposing planned reductions in discretionary repair grants. They are also disturbed, as well they might be, by the low take-up rate of grants.

The reasons why there should be such widespread lack of care and maintenance in the private sector, particularly since we are at the end of a 'builders' repair boom', are complex, but two in particular stand out. One is the diversion of building society loans for purchase rather than improvement work. The other is that because of bounding house prices owners are, regardless of declining fabric and fitting conditions, primarily interested in the increasing value of their property. The issue is not, therefore, just about the level of grants or the degree of their take-up, but how the government can encourage private owners to take proper care of a large slice of the nation's housing stock.

What viewers want

David Aldridge writes: British television viewers would like to see more coverage of industrial affairs and Parliament and less about the antics of the National Front. Who says so? They do – in their answers to a survey carried out by the Independent Broadcasting Authority. The figures certainly go against the commonly held assumptions in television newsrooms that industrial and Parliamentary stories, however important, tend to bore the average viewer; and conversely, stories such as Robert Relf's phoney martyrdom, which are thought of as 'lively', are shown to be of little interest.

Not too much should be read into the results bearing in mind that the total sample was just 300 in the Midlands and Lancashire. Nonetheless, in an industry that is so reluctant to listen to outside advice it is significant that the IBA itself should have felt that such a survey was necessary.

Viewers were given nine news subjects and were then asked which ones should receive most coverage. The results were computed so that the higher the positive number the stronger the demand for coverage, and the higher the negative score the greater the desire for less coverage. Viewers were also asked about their personal knowledge of these nine subjects: three points meant they knew 'quite a lot', two points 'just a bit' and one point 'as good as nothing'.

While most of the topics that scored highly in the first list also did well in the second, it is worth noting that Northern Ireland was one subject for which viewers claimed to have some knowledge but little interest. It's also instructive that despite the broadcasting of Parliament, or maybe because of it, viewers said they had a relatively poor knowledge of what goes on at Westminster but were keen to find out. Of the National Front they knew little and cared to know even less.

The survey also sought to establish viewers' assessments of bias in television news coverage, but, since it made no attempt to discover which way the bias was thought to go, the results are not particularly illuminating. Predictably, the royal family achieved the highest positive score: 63 per cent thought TV's corgi coverage was usually fair. And once again the National Front was at the bottom, with only 18 per cent finding the coverage fair – but we have no way of knowing whether the rest (excluding the massive 45 per cent of don't knows) thought television news was too favourable to the Front or not favourable enough.

Of particular interest in the current climate are viewers' answers on industrial news coverage. Some 16 per cent thought the coverage was always biased one way (we don't know which way), 24 per cent though it was sometimes biased one way and sometimes the other, 38 per cent found it usually fair and 21 per cent couldn't say.

SUBJECT	DEMAND	KNOWLEDGE
Industrial news	+41	2.12
Parliament	+37	1.92
Royal family	+31	2.33
Immigrant affairs	+20	1.91
Human rights in Communist countries	+ 3	1.68
N. Ireland	– 2	2.07
Rhodesia	– 4	1.84
Middle East	– 7	1.77
National Front	–52	1.63

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POLITICS
Patrick Wintour

How Jim Callaghan built a government in his own image

Leviathan at Westminster

THERE IS A certain deep irony in the fact that Labour might go to the scaffold next month because James Callaghan cannot impose party discipline: Callaghan is a natural disciplinarian, a whip manqué. Yet forty or so Labour rebels have made it impossible for Callaghan to provide Scotland with devolution and thus win the support of the SNP in a confidence vote; only the Ulster Unionists can save him and the government. To a great extent Callaghan has brought this on himself: he has tried to buy support and loyalty in the Parliamentary Labour Party with an enthusiastic use of his powers of patronage unrivalled in recent times. His appointments cannot have inspired the electorate and his methods have not inspired the Labour Party.

As a machine man, Callaghan hates factionalism. His first call on becoming leader of the party was to urge the Tribune and Manifesto groups to wind themselves up. But Callaghan did not fully understand the machine he was in charge of. Whilst he was at the Foreign Office between 1974 and 1976 he never got to know the 1974 intake of MPs. His minority government has been dogged by successful backbench rebellions: over defence, devolution (twice), public spending cuts in 1976 and, most recently, over pay sanctions. Callaghan has grumbled 'Clem Attlee would never have allowed this' whilst his chief whip, Michael Cocks, has privately admitted that Jim does not understand the younger independent generation in the PLP.

Callaghan has assumed that his repeated use of the bluff 'sack me or back me' could maintain party unity. When this stick failed, he has started using the carrot – his patronage. The whip's official title, after all, is patronage secretary – as Enoch Powell recently described it, 'an old fashioned term for something not so old fashioned.' It has become part of the machinery of government. Callaghan's use of it has been increasingly out of tune with a party that has championed democracy and opposed personal appointment. He has carried it out with such gusto (and without the subtlety of Wilson) that a small number of backbench MPs are mounting serious resistance to this demeaning form of dominance.

They want the whole of the Labour cabinet elected by the PLP. At the moment the party elects 12 members of the shadow cabinet and in the past has chosen fairly evenhandedly between left and right wingers. The cause for concern in the present cabinet is not so much its political complexion, as its being heavily peopled by placemen, nodders and good listeners. It must be the first time for years that the Labour front bench is actually more devoid of talent than the Tories.

AN UNHEALTHILY large number of the 21 cabinet members owe their seat to the fact that either Wilson or Callaghan was paying off some old personal or political debt, except that Wilson's penchant for gimmickry and surprise allowed the intellectuals' quota in the cabinet to be occasionally exceeded.

For Merlyn Rees, Callaghan's candidate for the general secretaryship of the party as long ago as 1967, the Home Office was a reward for following Callaghan around the ministries and running his campaign for leadership. David Ennals, another of Callaghan's acolytes, worked for him in the Home Office and, more recently, in the Foreign Office. David Owen's lack of interest in foreign affairs only lends support to the view that he got his job as a result of his friendship with the prime minister's son-in-law, Peter Jay.

Michael Foot's reward for doing so well in the leadership election and his price for allowing Callaghan to leave Barbara Castle out of the Cabinet, was the right to give jobs to two middle ranking Tribunites – Albert Booth and Stan Orme. Fred Mulley, the soporific defence minister, earned his place by dint of his chairmanship of the party during the split over Europe in 1971. Charles Morris, the anonymous Minister of State for Wales was promoted when Callaghan's oldest ally, Cledwyn Hughes, refused.

Prizes of some sort, however, are reserved for John Smith and Eric Varley. Smith was originally opposed to devolution but with the equanimity of the ambitious reversed his position and masterminded the details of the devolution bill's passage through the Commons. He was rewarded with Edmund Dell's job at the department of trade and is certainly an improvement on his predecessor, now happily ensconced in merchant banking. It is said that on his arrival Smith asked a senior civil servant why the PLP meeting had not been placed in his diary for Thursday. The bemused civil servant inquired: 'What is the PLP, minister?' Alarmed, Smith asked for how long the phone to the House of Commons had been out of order. 'About two years, minister' was the reply.

Eric Varley deserves recognition for being the only minister who got a good grip on the greasy pole by offering, successfully, to resign. In 1967 Varley was a little known, anti-market, union sponsored MP. The resignation of the whip who looked after the East Midlands MPs meant sudden promotion for Varley, as the only suitable candidate. Unfortunately, however, the whips' office was having difficulty making a new vote-recording totaliser work properly. The Tories said it was a waste of money; Wilson in the white hot heat etc. said nonsense, and to prove his point said the whips' office was overmanned. Varley stepped forward smartly, volunteering to resign on the last in, first out principle. Deeply gratified, Wilson took on Varley as a PPS, despite having one already. Within seven years Varley was in the cabinet.

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AMONG THEIR FELLOW MPs, the Callaghan cabinet is known as 'The gaffers' men'. But Callaghan has also appointed a whole range of similar mediocrities at lower ministerial level. As a result of some valuable ground work whilst he was Foreign Secretary, Callaghan has ensured that a whole gaggle of Welsh MPs hold government positions. Together with the trades union supported centrists, they are the bedrock of his power and have ensured there has not been a whiff of treachery in the three years he has been leader. The Taffia, as it is known, includes Speaker George Thomas, Alan Williams at the DoI, Ted Rowlands at the Foreign Office, the Alec and Barry Joneses at the Welsh Office, Cledwyn Hughes as leader of the PLP, Brynmor John at the Home Office and Denzil Davies at the Treasury.

Callaghan has also promoted a praetorian guard, most of whom were responsible for his election to leadership. (During the election it was taken as given that your promotion was dependent on whether your leadership choice was triumphant. Indeed when the campaign managers of the candidates got together they found, on adding up their respective hard pledges, that there were a hundred more pledges than MPs.) Those who campaigned for Callaghan can hardly be described either as the best or brightest but to a man they have been rewarded.

Callaghan has continued the practice of slipping undoubtedly loyal followers into ministries where the senior minister might be regarded as suspect. Thus Dickson Mabon (a Jenkinsite who very obtrusively switched to Callaghan) and John Cunningham (a family friend, former PPS to Callaghan between 1974 and 1976, who shares a flat with Pendrey) are to be found in the same Ministry as Benn. Albert Booth at Employment is surrounded by two Callaghanite Parliamentary Under-Secretaries, John Golding (a very assiduous whip under Wilson) and John Grant, instigator of the recent pro-incomes policy initiative, *A Better Way*.

Some left wingers, notably Neil Kinnock, have refused office for fear of being thereby silenced but, generally, talented backbenchers, often with considerable reputations in their particular field, have been simply ignored. The excluded come from both sides of the party political spectrum, but if anything the majority are Labour right-wingers. Callaghan's touchstone seems to be to avoid intellect if possible. The most glaring example of this, of course, was to snub the late John Mackintosh, a Professor of Politics at Edinburgh University. Callaghan has also left out MPs like George Cunningham, Colin Phipps the geologist, Phillip Whitehead the broadcaster, Roderick MacFarquhar, the former editor of *China Quarterly*. On the left there has been no room for Bryan Gould, a former Oxford don or Robin Cook with his considerable knowledge of defence matters.

Similarly the first heads to roll on Callaghan taking office were two independent-minded but centrist men who knew their subject – Alex Lyon at the Home Office and Gerry Fowler at Education.

There is no shortage of supine job-seeking replacements; many of them with such a reputation amongst their colleagues. For example, Ian Wrigglesworth, the former chairman of the Manifesto Group, was recently knicknamed 'Kneepads' by Dennis Skinner – a reference to his tendency to grovel for promotion. The most widely acclaimed toady to emerge recently is John Sever who has replaced Brian Walden as MP. Toadying is a subtle social matter of talking to the right influential people in the party. These people are often to be found on the Welsh and Scottish tables in the members' tea room. It is best not to be seen with the younger unreliable elements near the door. It has served Sever well. He is already PPS to Peter Archer and on the inside track. More established as ambitious is Mike Thomas but it is said that he is handicapped by his tendency to display his undoubted intelligence to the whips. Thomas also tries too hard. At the last Labour Party conference his speech moving the defence of the Government's absurd economic policy was so loyalist that it was nearly drowned under shouts of 'give this man a job'.

THERE ARE MORE discreet ways to show willing. One surefire method is to send down underarm lobs during Prime Minister's question time which can then be spectacularly hit for six by a grateful PM. For example last July Gwilym Roberts set the PM this poser:

> Does my right hon. friend accept that if all the proposals which the opposition have supported in the House had been carried out there would be a million more unemployed than at present. Would he care to comment on that?

Another method is to ask PQs so the Minister can make a prepared written statement. A third ingratiating technique is to oppose ten minute rule Bills on behalf of the Government. Lengthening debates by filibustering for the Government is another method. One MP told me of a time when he was nearly manhandled into the Chamber by a whip and forced to speak for 30 minutes on incomes policy in order to fill out time. The next day the whips were round asking whether he was interested in a trip to India.

The whips have plenty of such sweeteners to keep the faithful MPs' tails happily wagging. Most weeks the whips are able to hand out trips and invitations to embassy parties. As Paul Rose explains:

> If you start voting the wrong way, the whips' attitude can change overnight. You can become a non-person in their eyes. It's quite Orwellian really.

Whips can make life difficult by refusing to find MPs pairs; they can also make it easy for the obedient. The whips help arrange for MPs to go to the overseas meetings of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. They make recommendations for the NATO Council and the Council of Europe. This can be used both to reward favourities and get rid of troublemakers. The whips also have influence on the selection committee of the all-party Inter-Parliamentary Union, which organises trips abroad paid for with taxpayers' money. The serious nature of this organisation was exemplified in 1972 when Norman Buchan, fascinated by Allende's experiment, applied to go on the trip to Chile. He was turned down but asked by the IPU whether he would be interested in going on the Brazilian trip the next year.

But this method of keeping backbenchers busy has not proved sufficient for Callaghan, who has made several attempts to turn back the more liberal tide of Richard Crossman, as Leader of the House, and John Silkin as chief whip. For example, he has managed to extend the principle of collective responsiblity to the 30-odd PPSs who frequently do little more than fagging for their ministers; though as fags they know that the best means of advancement is to attach oneself to a rising star. Callaghan has sent a letter to all the PPSs explaining their conditions of employment and, in the process, redefined them by saying that the PPS must at all times behave with the responsibility of a minister (ie vote with the government) but must not assume the power of a minister. Wilson sacked five PPSs in his 1967 reshuffle but Callaghan has used this power more frequently: Bryan Gould, Brian Davies and Robert Bean were dismissed in February 1977 for voting against import dues on goods from the EEC; Jeff Rooker and Joe Dean were sacked for supporting an amendment to exclude Orkney and Shetland from the Scottish assembly. Brian Grocott – PPS to John Silkin – was sacked for voting against more parliamentary seats for Northern Ireland. Benn's PPS, Brian Sedgemore was sacked for reading out a Treasury memo at a select committee meeting. Callaghan had objected to the original appointment of Sedgemore as unreliable and only relented after Benn insisted.

Cabinet ministers' freedom has also been restricted under the guise of collective cabinet responsibility. Whilst Shirley Williams can plead the cause of an incomes policy – which is not part of the government's programme – left wingers can only speak their minds at public party meetings by using a code language, in a way rather reminiscent of pre-revolutionary Russia.

Callaghan insists that all speeches by cabinet ministers are seen by No 10 before being delivered and has now decided that he is the final arbiter of the content of Transport House party political broadcasts. He has even gone so far as to insist upon who shall appear to represent the party on television during by-election night coverage, even if this choice differs from that of the TV company.

Presumably Callaghan's aim has been to build party unity by these methods, but a party is not made strong by stifling criticism. Callaghan has misread the mood of a significant number of MPs if he thinks they are so thrilled at joining the best club in Europe that they will be blindly loyal. As it is, Callaghan has left the Party with a weak front bench, an articulate and active opposition and the prospect of almost certain defeat at the polls.

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How good schools can change children

This week, Professor Michael Rutter of London University publishes a research document called Fifteen Thousand Hours which tells the real truth about comprehensive schools. RICK ROGERS reports.

PARENTS, whatever their social standing, believe passionately that it matters what schools their children go to. Voices thicken with identical emotions, whether it's a hall full of working-class mothers complaining that their children are excluded from the neighbourhood's most-coveted schools, or whether it's a middle-class dinner-table making tactical estimates about withdrawal from the public sector. Lay opinion holds that if you get into the right school, your prospects in life will be mightily improved.

Professional opinion, for a dozen years or more, has said the opposite. Schools, the educational researchers have told us – often sadly – do little to affect people's intellectual performance or general competence. Still less can they justify genial ambitions to moderate social inequality by re-engineering the educational system.

In theory, the principle of neutrality of schooling is capable of several political implications. It might – if believed by the laity – diminish the magnetism of 'independent' schools for the modestly well-off: if schools are irrelevant, why risk financial overload in pursuit of a replacement for the fast-vanishing grammar school? But in practice, the effect is conservative.

First, the comprehensive system is diminished in moral purpose. Inevitably, it cannot reproduce all the traditional attractions of selective education. Why should the middle-classes abandon a system which they have always found comfortable – if their sacrifice, however marginal, generates no worthwhile benefit elsewhere? Second, the idea that schools are neutral combines most naturally with the propositions of Cyril Burt, Hans Eysenck, Arthur Jensen and other writers celebrated in the *Black Paper* movement: human abilities are inherited; 'equality' in education merely degrades the performance of the naturally gifted; ultimately, the distribution of power and wealth in our society is nothing more than the economic system conferring proper reward upon superior genetic combinations.

On this basis, a formidable battery of conservative arguments can be deployed. And, characteristically, the guns can only point in one direction. That is to say, from ideas about the determinism of genetics and the impotence of schools, it is easy to assemble an argument *generally* damaging to comprehensive education. But nothing can be evolved in the same way which criticises the *particular* action of a parent removing a child into the private sector. He or she does no harm to anyone else. Freedom is merely being exercised, in pursuit of an advantage which has no theoretical existence. As in all the best conservative arguments, theory exists amicably alongside a practice in which nobody doubts for an instant that their own children will benefit from a furious scramble after perceived educational advantage. Much of the time, the theory is passed around as little more than a set of half-formed prejudices: sometimes it will be advanced with sophistication by an educational bureaucrat anxious to fend off the rising parental demand to have examination results listed and compared between schools. (If schools make no difference, what is the point of making comparisons which might embarrass the Local Education Authority?)

Lately, the combined structure of the theory has suffered heavy damage from the discovery that Sir Cyril Burt – pioneer educational psychologist, and patron-saint of the *Black Paper* movement – merely forged much of the striking evidence through which he claimed to prove that intelligence is genetically determined, and strongly tied to social mobility (ie that the working-class are inherently duller and less educable than the middle and upper classes). The hereditarian proposition can still be advanced, but not in the same sweeping and clear-cut manner that seemed permissible – in some people's eyes at least – while Sir Cyril's massive contribution was accepted as genuine.*

Damage to genetic determinism, of course, did not affect the proposition that schools produce no measurable changes in their pupils. The special contribution of the research-team led by Michael Rutter, and reported in *Fifteen Thousand Hours*, is to shatter that proposition beyond any obvious hope of repair. What is shown is that the 15,000 hours which the average child spends in school can make critical differences to his or her intellectual performance, and prospects in life. Exactly as every mother believes – against the wisdom that has been educationally received up to now – schools vary sharply in performance. Far from it being the case that schools are merely passive reflectors of the social system around them, Rutter and his colleagues has shown that schools only a few miles apart, receiving pupil intakes precisely the same in social background and intellectual ability, are capable of producing radically different educational results. And these differences in outcome are in no sense random: they can be related to particular qualities of schools as social institutions, and to the skilfulness and professional ethos of the teachers engaged. At the extremes of the spectrum examined, the differences produced are dramatic ones: the *least able* children at Rutter's best school did as well as the *most able* children in his worst school (see illustration).

Continuing from this: *in the schools in which children of ordinary ability did better than usual, the able children also tended to do better.*

To judge by conversation, this is the result which Michael Rutter finds most exciting – 'certainly' he says, 'it is the one about which I felt most trepidation as a hypothesis'. It is firm, operational evidence against the crude elitist argument – 'more means worse' – which alleges that children of moderate ability can only be assisted at the expense of those more gifted. Education, in the picture drawn by Rutter's research, ceases to be a game of beggar-my-neighbour, and becomes a subtle process in which – given sufficient moral energy, and given suitable organisation – individuals can assist each other towards improvements of performance which few, if any, could achieve alone.

There are, of course, hard lessons to come with the good news. If we can now discover why some schools and some teachers perform well, we can also discover why some others perform badly – causing, thereby, considerable damage to their pupils. Such distinctions and judgments are not obviously welcome either to education authorities or to the teaching profession, who naturally enough like to believe that no schools are less than satisfactory, and that all teacher-performance is adequate. Clearly, if the message of *Fifteen Thousand Hours* is accepted, it will intensify parental demands for more disclosure and more accountability from the educational system. But discussion of the consequences may be postponed until a little more of the history has been set out.

AMERICAN RESEARCH has been the principal source of evidence for the irrelevance of schools. In 1966 James Coleman published *Equality of Educational Opportunity*, a study of 645,000 students in primary and secondary schools. He concluded that educational attainment was not affected by variations in the schooling a child received. This view was supported and elaborated in a massive team-study led by Christopher Jencks and published as *Inequality* (1972) stating that:

> Variations in what children learn at school depend largely on variations in what they bring to school, not on variations in what schools offer them.

Jencks gave a league-table of the factors which he thought affected 'cognitive inequality': genetics, 33 to 50 per cent; environment 25 to 40 per cent; amount of schooling 5 to 15 per cent; quality of primary schooling 3 per cent; quality of secondary schooling 1 per cent. (It seems remarkable, in retrospect, that

*NS 24 November 1978, with refs. to previous articles in *The Sunday Times* and *Science*. Briefly, Burt claimed to find numerous examples of identical twins reared apart and to show that nature, not nurture, decided their abilities. Many, perhaps most examples were fabricated. Later, when claiming to correlate IQ and social class, he produced results so 'perfect' as to be mathematically impossible. In forthcoming issues of the NS, we intend to continue the debate between hereditarians such as Professor Hans Eysenck and their opponents.

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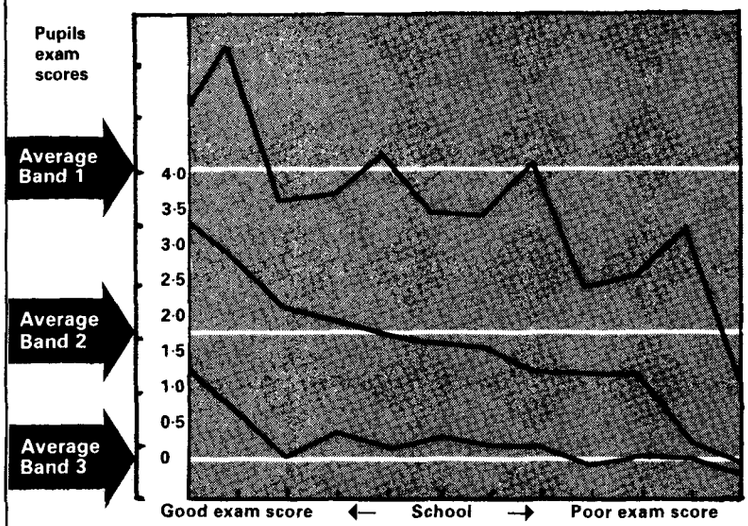
What difference do schools make?



The horizontal lines record the average exam scores of all children in the twelve secondary schools which Michael Rutter's team studied: the children having been sorted into ability-bands by verbal-reasoning tests given in primary school. With the best school at the left, the jagged lines depict the exam scores of the ability bands in each separate school, showing that 'the average score for band 3 children in the most successful school was as good as that for band 1 children in the least successful school . . . it may be seen that, in general, in schools where band 2 children are doing better than average, the band 1 and band 3 children also tend to be getting better than average examination results.' The team's report, Fifteen Thousand Hours, is published by Open Books (£3.50).

people continued going to school.) To Jencks, 'environment' meant the home and scarcely at all the school:

> Schools serve primarily as selection and certification agencies, whose job it is to measure and label people, and . . . only secondarily to change people. This implies that schools serve primarily to legitimise inequality, not to create it.

Lady Plowden's report on British primary education had already concluded that schools could do little to modify the influences produced at home: Michael Power's investigations of variations in the delinquency rates of secondary schools seemed to suggest that it depended on the proportion of their intake who had already had difficulty at primary school. Writing in the 1975 *Black Paper*, Professor Hans Eysenck stated the geneticist version in terms very like Jencks':

> (Children) enter school different from each other in many important ways; and they leave school different from each other in many important ways. Educationalists are realising more and more that children leave school essentially with what they brought into it; the influence of school in promoting 'equality' is so limited as to be almost non-existent.

How did so much costly research come to produce such formidably misleading results? Essentially, because of the wrong questions being asked about the performance of schools, and the wrong sort of evidence being adduced to answer them. Most of the studies relied on large-scale surveys of attainment as measured by standardised tests – measuring things that schools don't actually teach. For instance, James Coleman, on whom Jencks relied for many of his conclusions, relied in turn on a single measure of verbal ability.

Since then, it has been realised that the effects of schooling can only be studied by the measurement of attainments which are specifically taught in schools. Use, as in Coleman's study, of a general intellectual measure inevitably undervalues the effect of schools. Children tend to learn reading not just at school, but also at home – similarly, the influences which encourage someone to do well in English literature or social studies are likely to be wider than the classroom itself. Better, therefore, to investigate subjects like science and mathematics, where teaching is more concentrated inside the school.

Further, the effectiveness of schools can only be measured if the right features of school life are measured – that is, the ones which have the strongest effect on performance. Christopher Jencks used a very narrow set of variables, principally to do with the economic resources available to schools. He ignored the values and internal life of schools: the style of teaching; the quality of organisation; the uses of discipline; the relationships between pupils and teachers in the classroom; variables which are revealed in *Fifteen Thousand Hours* to have decisive effects upon what happens.

Beyond this, none of the 'anti-school' studies knew what the sample children were like before they entered school. All sorts of complex – and controversial – statistical techniques had to be employed to 'guess' what the children would have been like. And, of course, comparing home influences with school influences is tricky because the worst home is much more unlike the best home than Tough Babies Comprehensive School is unlike Eton. Once again, the school effect is apt to be under-estimated.

Finally, most large-scale studies have examined the differences between individuals, rather than looking at overall levels of attainment: rather as though the aim of educational reform was to make people identical, instead of socially equal. To take a physical parallel, the average height of children has risen about nine centimetres during the last 50 years. But individual children are not the same height, and never will be. Similarly, while educational reform might lessen or even eliminate the 'cognitive inequality' of a class – just as, in some fortunate countries, the physical disadvantages of working-class children have been eliminated – there would be no reason to expect that individuals within the class would differ any less than they did before.

OF COURSE, detailed examination has always made clear that schools are not alike: that they vary in truancy, classroom behaviour, academic attainment and many other things. More and more, it has been difficult to believe that none of the differences matter. But until *Fifteen Thousand Hours* it was not possible to draw any firm conclusions: nobody knew enough about any group of children to be able to distinguish between the effects of primary schools, the effects of secondary schools, and the effects of other things altogether. Furthermore, most research inside schools concentrated on relationships in the classroom rather than in the school as a whole. What was needed was a longitudinal study which would follow a particular cohort of children right through their school careers, while analysing on the way the nature of the institutions at work on them.

Michael Rutter's interests, as a child psychiatrist in South London, developed naturally into research of this kind: starting with the problems of particular people, and moving on to a study of the education system itself as a means of understanding those problems. In 1970 he undertook a major study comparing primary schools in Inner London with ones on the Isle of Wight. The London schools differed widely in rates of behavioural difficulty and reading failure.

It did not seem as though the schools were receiving different sorts of children, but it was impossible to be sure, because the survey revealed little about what the children had been like before going to school. What had been collected, however, was information which could be used in a future study of variations produced by the effect of secondary school.

About two-thirds of this 1970 sample went on to one of the 20 non-selective schools in the South London area (others moved away, or went to selective schools). All of them were re-tested in 1974, when they were about 14, and in their third year of secondary schooling – for emotional problems, behavioural difficulties, reading comprehension and non-verbal intelligence. More information was obtained about parental occupation, ethnic

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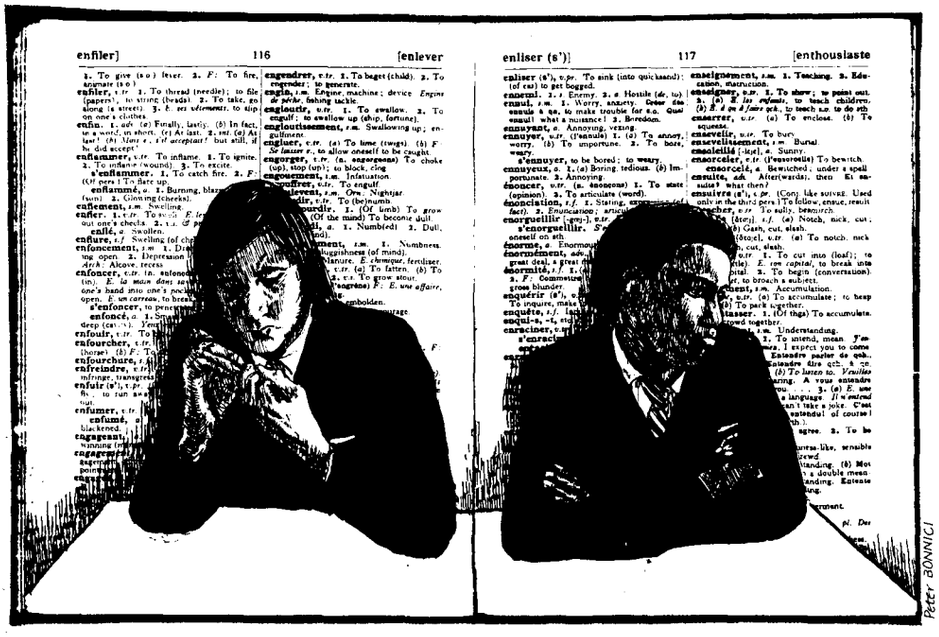

background and levels of delinquency. Rutter gave similar tests to *all* the children in the 20 schools, to see whether the veterans of his 1970 primary 'sample' were different in any way.

No substantial differences emerged. But between the schools themselves there were major differences in delinquency rates, emotional problems, reading difficulties and the like. To be sure, the schools were receiving very different intakes: in some cases, 50 per cent of children arrived from primary school with reading or behavioural problems, and in some cases only seven per cent. But the differences in intake did not explain the difference in test scores at 14, *because the schools with the most advantaged intakes were not necessarily those with the best outcomes.*

For example, the rates of behavioural disturbance for boys ranged from 19 per cent below expectation – based on assessment of what the children had been like at ten, just before going to secondary school – to 30 per cent above expectation. For girls, the rate of behavioural disturbance ranged from 20 per cent below expectation to 38 per cent above.

As the test variations could not be explained by the children's known histories, by their family background or by the type of primary school attended, it seemed clear that some of the secondary schools were exerting a serious and beneficial influence on their pupils. Some particular features of those schools must be responsible. The research-team changed focus to study twelve of them in fine detail – a spread of large and small; mixed and single-sex; voluntary-aided and authority-maintained; split-site and single-site schools. All were non-selective, serving the worn, congested Inner London area just south of the river.

THE NEED WAS to define success, and measure its relationship to institutional differences among the schools. Already possessing a unique knowledge of the 'intake' received by the schools, Rutter's team reported on four tests of outcome:

Attendance. The regularity of all fifth-year pupils (usually the worst attenders) was checked during a September week and a January week. The average scores of the twelve schools varied from 12.8 to 17.3 out of a possible 20. Pupils of lesser ability, and ones from families of low occupational status, were more prone to absenteeism. But even after the intake data were used to adjust for this, the variation between schools remained 'almost identical' – 11.85 to 16.8 out of 20, with only two schools changing places.

Behaviour. Aspirations vary considerably, so the team tried to examine standards which *all* the sample schools agreed on. A scale of 25 items was composed, from the anonymous self-reports of children and the observations of researchers who measured the area of graffiti, recorded fights, and monitored classroom behaviour ('Exclude fidgeting, but include e.g. rhythmic tapping on desks, chewing gum, sitting on desk/feet on desk, quiet singing/humming, combing hair, and the use of swearing . . .') The best school scored *five times* better than the worst school. As the scale information did not relate to individuals, it could not be adjusted for intake as precisely as attendance. But the schools with the worst behaviour were not necessarily those with the largest proportions of 'difficult' children coming from primary school: the differences at secondary level were too big to be explained in that way.

Delinquency. Of course, this largely occurs 'off-site'. But as earlier studies (including Rutter's) had shown large variations between schools, it was taken as a fair measure of a school's quality. A 'delinquent' pupil was one who had at least once been officially *cautioned or found guilty in a juvenile court* (though among girls delinquency was not common enough to be worth analysing). Boys were less likely to become delinquent if they had high verbal-reasoning (VR) scores, and came from higher occupational groups. But after 'controlling for intake', the probabilities of delinquency varied startlingly: at the worst school, it was three times greater than at the best. (At the worst school, a boy in the top VR band and top occupational group was as likely to be a delinquent as a boy from the bottom band and top ground at the second-best school.)

Examination results. Comparison was made between different passes and different exams (GCE and CSE) by establishing a points system. As the team expected to find, the best 'predictor' of exam results was a child's verbal-reasoning score at ten years (given the district's social decay, it was unsurprising to find less than half the London average of *top-ability children*). But, as shown in the chart (p. 391) the schools were making such large differences to these predictions that 'the average score for band 3 children in the most successful school was as good as that for band 1 children in the least successful school'. And, as the chart shows, the greater success of these less-obviously gifted children was not obtained by degrading the performance of others. After adjustment for differences of VR score in the intake, the academic record of the best school was about four times better than that of the worst, and variations of this impressive order were still visible after further adjustment for family occupational background.* What was there about the successful schools that was different?

RUTTER'S TEAM saw three elements in the life of a school: its physical and administrative features; the 'ecological' influences from its environment; and its own internal organisation, which they called the 'school process'.

The first element made no difference. Outcomes were much the same in voluntary and maintained schools; in single-sex and mixed schools; in large ones and small ones. Buildings and grounds were not important: split-site schools and overcrowded schools actually did a little better. Neither size of class nor pupil-teacher ratio was significant (though all had generous ratios by national standards). House-based and year-based systems of pastoral care came out the same. And – an ironic comment on many fierce battles among teachers and parents – it did not seem to matter much whether children were divided into 'streams', 'band' or 'mixed-ability groups' for teaching purposes (although, to be sure, there was not much mixed-ability work).

But differences in 'school process' affected outcomes very considerably. There were seven 'conceptual areas' within which differences were examined: academic emphasis; teacher actions in lessons; rewards and punishments; pupil conditions (did the school provide a pleasant environment?); children's responsibilities within the school; stability of staff and friendship groups; and organisation of the staff. Much research ingenuity was devoted to measuring these.

Academic emphasis, for instance, was examined through the degree to which homework was set *and checked*, by the expectations teachers had of examination success for their pupils, by the extent to which children's work was displayed in the school, and the degree of use of the school library. Where these scores were high, academic success was also high.

> The findings, of course, do not show how and why homework is associated with better outcomes. But it may well be that in addition to its practical value in providing consolidation of the learning . . . introduced in school time, homework may also be of symbolic importance in emphasising the school's concern for academic progress, and its expectation that pupils have the ability and self-discipline needed to work without direct supervision.

Self-discipline, encouraged by clearly-understood guidelines, emerged as the most effective form of discipline. Punishment, the aspect of discipline which is most celebrated

*GCE/CSE exams are not designed for the least-able 40% of the population. In order to follow the progress of this large minority, the Rutter team decided on a *fifth* measure: employment experience after school. This work is still in progress.

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by traditional parents and traditional teachers, emerged as having little connections with outcomes of any kind:

> Overall, there was a tendency (which fell just short of statistical significance) for *high* levels of corporal punishment to be associated with rather *worse* behaviour. If the one school with exceptionally high levels of corporal punishment (and a moderate behaviour score) is excluded the correlation becomes statistically significant.

Praise, encouragement, and the devolution of some responsibilities to children had more effect on outcomes than punishment – as did the skill and experience (and punctuality) of teachers. Outcomes were better where the staff had a structured decision-making system, and where work was jointly planned.

Were some schools getting more naturally-gifted teachers? It did not seem so: differences in effectiveness always applied to experienced teachers, with inexperienced ones doing poorly everywhere. Furthermore, the same action by a teacher could produce quite different results in different schools: everything pointed towards careful organisation producing a school ethos within which it was much easier to become an effective teacher.

Not all of the associations of 'process' items with outcome were strong ones. But when the results were drawn together, it emerged that the schools achieved similar rankings on each of the (conceptually distinct) aspects of 'process', suggesting that something real had been observed. And the *overall* school process score was very strongly linked with the outcome score for behaviour – 0.92, where perfect correlation would be 1.0. The correlation with academic attainment was also substantial, at 0.76. Correlations with attendance (0.65) and delinquency (0.68) were also significant.

Examination of the 'ecology' of each school produced some negations of conventional wisdom. For instance, schools with poorer in-school behaviour were *not* admitting larger proportions of children from delinquency-prone districts. But the school's ecology could affect it by changing the balance of its intake in terms of academic ability, occupational background, ethnic make-up and proportion of 'difficult' children. 'School process' and its close dependent, behaviour, were not affected by any unbalances in intake. But lack of ability-balance was important, because the percentage of band 1 children in a school was well-correlated with overall exam attainment (0.61), attendance (0.76), and low delinquency (0.75), with occupational balance having considerable effect as well.

BLUNTLY, the evidence supports the belief that the whole performance of a comprehensive school is degraded if the neighbourhood's abler children are 'creamed off' from it. And further emphasis is provided by the final stage of the *Fifteen Thousand Hours* investigation, in which attempts were made by statistical analysis to decide the relative importance of all the variables measured. Chiefly, the team wished to investigate the *combined* effects of school process and ability-balance of intake.

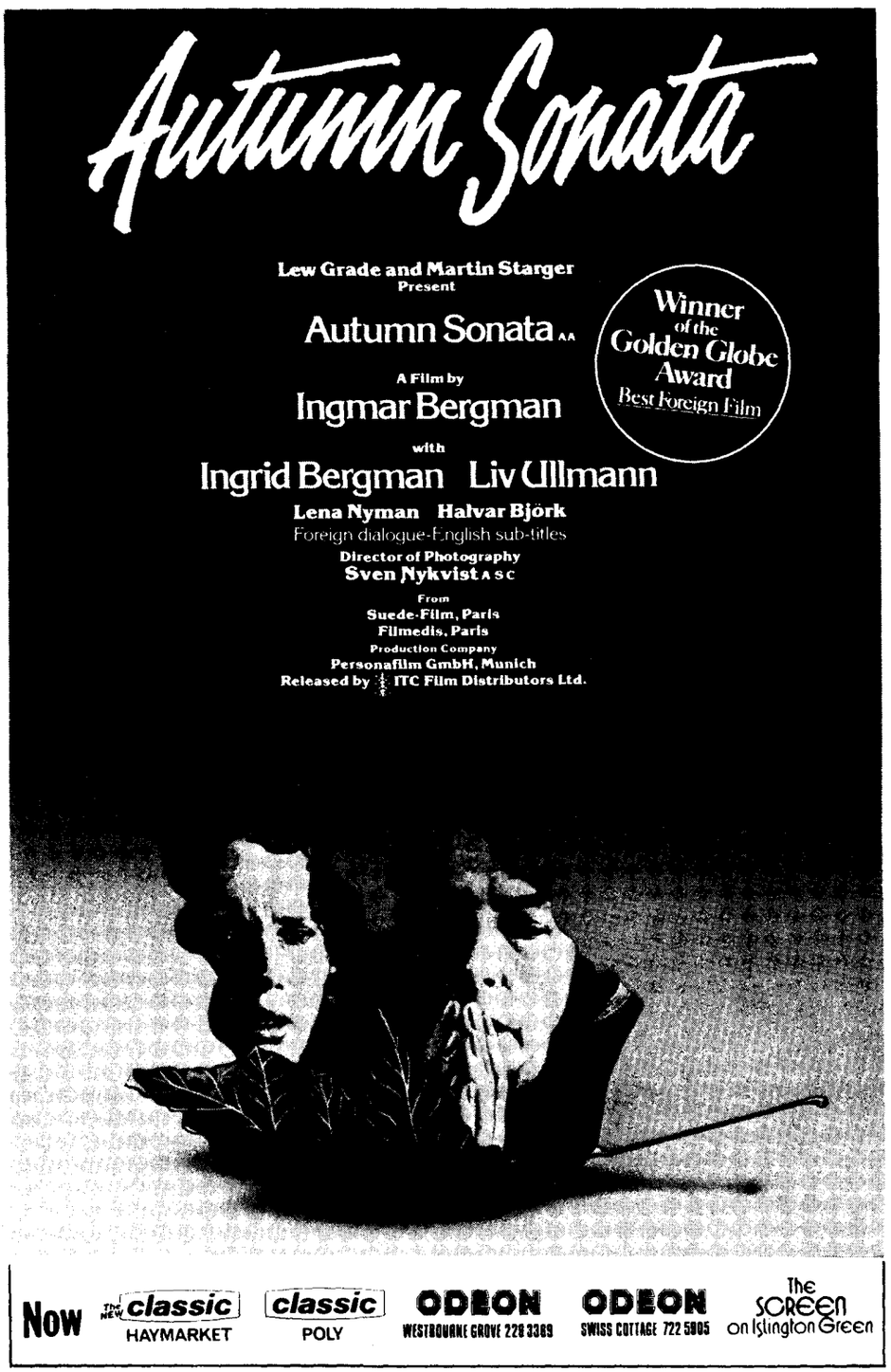
To do so they employed a statistical technique called 'log-linear modelling' which, by comparing the 'simplicity' of different explanations of an outcome, is able to measure which variables have most importance. By this test

> the effects of school process and balance of intake on examination success are much greater than the effects of parental occupation and about half as powerful as the child's own ability level.

That finding was cross-checked by use of another device: multiple linear regression, which examines the relative effect of each variable after its associations with the others have been taken into account. Once the child's VR score – always the most important predictor – had been taken into account, parental occupation became insignificant. But school process still correlated significantly with exam success. Taken together, claim the *Fifteen Thousand Hours* team, the two analyses show that children's intellectual performance can be improved by the school they go to – and that the critical elements involved in this improvement are the quality of the school's performance, and the comprehensive balance of its intake.

MICHAEL RUTTER is Professor of Child Psychiatry at the Institute of Psychiatry, University of London. His other publications include **Maternal Deprivation Reassessed** and **Helping Troubled Children.**

His principal collaborators on **Fifteen Thousand Hours** were: **Peter Mortimore,** an educational psychologist, former teacher, and school inspector who is now Director of Research for the Inner London Education Authority; and **Barbara Maughan,** a former child-care officer who is undertaking further research in London secondary schools. They were assisted by **Janet Ouston,** also a psychologist, and by **Alan Smith,** a statistician.



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BUSINESS
Peter Kellner

The European elite is wary of capitalism. Ours is complaisant

Britain's brainwashed bourgeoisie

GERMANY's weekly *Der Spiegel* recently depicted Britain in graphic detail tottering on the edge of terminal economic decline. What, retorted David Owen, had they not heard about North Sea oil, or the strength of sterling, or our technological wizardry? In fact, the bad news is that the Germans already had a pretty dim view of our prospects; the worse news is that the French, Dutch and Belgians take an even dimmer view.

This information comes from a revealing survey organised by Market & Opinion Research International. Last summer it arranged for the same questions to be put to about 400 professional and managerial people in each of five countries. The results have some important messages at a time when Labour's 'industrial strategy' is running aground, and when our relations with the rest of Europe are once again under strain. Not only do the decision-making classes on the continent have a poor view of Britain; a large number refuse to share the British passion for *laissez-faire* policies.

What they think of Britain

	Germans	French	Belgians	Dutch
We make good quality products	50	30	38	47
We make poor quality products	20	14	15	14
We make good value products	48	24	36	38
We make poor value products	18	14	11	14
We make technically advanced products	39	14	21	23
We make technically out of date products	40	35	27	30
We deliver on time	24	11	26	18
We deliver late	33	27	23	29
We have a politically advanced system	57	14	20	10
We have a socially advanced system	37	21	17	24
We have industrious and efficient workers	27	7	16	9
We have a good economic future	19	15	12	15
We have a poor economic future	50	47	47	52

Note: all figures are in percentages. Interviewees were asked; I am going to ask your opinion of various countries. Which of these countries would you say in general . . . (produce good quality products, etc)? Figures above show percentage of people naming Britain.

PARADOXICALLY, the British seem to be neither as enthusiastic about the need for large companies, or as concerned about their power, as the Germans, French and Belgians. A significant minority of the Britons questioned – 23 per cent – disputed the view that 'large companies are essential for the nation's growth and expansion' – compared with only four per cent of Germans. At the same time the Germans – alone – overwhelmingly think that the profits of large companies are good for their customers.

But the Germans, and to a slightly lesser extent the French and Belgians, think large companies have too much power; and in all three countries a large minority think big industries should be controlled by the Government. In Britain and Holland, on the other hand, fewer people detect excessive corporate power – and fewer people want the Government to intervene.

In Holland's case part of the explanation is that the country, though small, hosts such large multinationals as Shell, Unilever and Philips. Most Dutchmen have evidently decided to accept their industrial fate with some equanimity. In Britain similar sentiments probably have more to do with the poor reputation of firms that have already been nationalised although a clear majority (58 to 25 per cent) agreed that 'in many of our industries one or two independent companies have too much control in their industry.'

Note: figures in the table show difference, in percentages, between those who agree and those who disagree. Plus sign shows more people agree; minus sign shows more people disagree.

AGAIN the British and Dutch answers are broadly similar: no, multinationals do not threaten our sovereignty; and yes, there should be more international regulation of their activities – though the enthusiasm for regulation is much stronger in France and Belgium.

France displays the most xenophobic tendencies of the five countries: it is the only one where a majority detect a threat to their sovereignty from multinationals. On the other hand there is a broad European consensus – more than on any other issue in the survey – that while multinationals make a valuable contribution to technological advance, they use their status to manipulate their funds to avoid taxation.

THE GERMANS most often have nice things to say about Britain; the French are the most grudging. In particular the German equivalent of our AB social classes have a higher opinion of our political system than of any other country's except the United States; and they have a higher opinion of our social system than of anyone else's except Holland's.

That the reputation of our Parliament and welfare state should survive our economic decline might appear encouraging. But, of the four continental countries surveyed, it is a view held only by the Germans. Elsewhere the only country with a decisively worse reputation is Italy. In France and the Low Countries the consensus is that our political and social set-up is roughly on a par with Belgium, and far less desirable than those of the United States, West Germany or Holland.

The reputation of large companies

	UK	W. Germany	France	Belgium	Holland
Do you agree or disagree that . . . Large companies are essential for the nation's expansion and growth?	+48	+84	+71	+57	+60
The profits of large companies ensure good quality of products and services?	+19	+55	−4	−39	−5
As companies grow larger they become cold and impersonal in their relations with people?	+68	+76	+44	+55	+50
There is too much power concentrated in the hands of a few large companies for the nation's good?	+15	+61	+40	+41	+3
It is in the country's interest that the big industries should be controlled by the Government?	−50	+1	−23	−10	−45

Do the multinationals need taming?

	UK	W. Germany	France	Belgium	Holland
Do you agree or disagree that . . . Multinationals constitute a serious threat to national sovereignty?	−45	−13	+22	−1	−58
Multinationals have made a valuable contribution to technological advance?	+73	+83	+79	+85	+95
Most multinational companies manipulate their funds to avoid taxation?	+51	+61	+64	+76	+54
There should be more international action to regulate the activities of the multinationals?	+17	+35	+63	+73	+30

Note: figures derived in same way as for table above.

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London Diary

☐ James 'Christian' Anderton, the garrulous and sanctimonious Chief Constable of Manchester, comes on the television yet again, exposing a conspiracy. There are a group of people at work, he says (tightly-knit, subversive, criminal etc. etc.). They are organising a concerted hate campaign against the police. Who are these people? He cannot say. What or who motivates them? He cannot say. He simply *knows* they are there. Suppose a Labour MP goes on television exposing a conspiracy of top police officers, army chiefs and civil service mandarins to subvert democracy (a much more likely hypothesis than Mr Anderton's). Suppose he 'cannot say' who they are or how they operate. He would be torn to pieces. Yet the unsubstantiated allegations of the Manchester Mouth get maximum publicity, and no criticism at all.

If Mr Anderton really does have a list of organised police critics, who is on it?

☐ For a start, what about Judge Joseph Zigmond? Last week, Judge Zigmond was sitting in Manchester Crown Court when there appeared in front of him a victim of Mr Anderton's Clean Up Manchester campaign. She was a barmaid from Hulme who had been convicted of getting clients for her girlfriend, a prostitute.

The judge fined the women £50. Then he said:

> Nine police officers over a period of two months spent their time, two or more at a time, night after night, in a public house and in a club in order to catch out the woman, who was having a lesbian relationship with a prostitute, in case she was receiving money from the prostitute.
>
> I should have thought, with the crime rate we have today and the nature of those crimes, they would have been better employed patrolling the streets of the city.

Watch it, judge! You can't say that sort of thing in Manchester! Not without going down in James 'Christian' Anderton's books as a conspirator, at any rate.

☐ In the old days, when general elections approached, Labour Governments tended to hold off from bashing Labour supporters. But not this time. Every week comes more news of another set of Labour supporters kicked in the teeth. At the weekend I had a long and gloomy conversation with Dennis Turner, a steelworker and Labour Party member from Bilston in Staffordshire.

Dennis is chairman of the Action Committee which has spent much of the last two years trying to stop the closure of the town's steel plant. To no avail. By this time next year 1,900 steelworkers, almost of all them Labour people, will be wandering around the West Midlands hopelessly looking for jobs. 'It's the economics of the madhouse,' says Dennis, sadly.

His committee has commissioned a detailed study from Aston University, which found the following. The 'saving' to British Steel from closing the Bilston plant will be £45m over five years. The cost of redundancy and unemployment pay over the same time will be £35m. The Aston study estimates that at a cost of £15m the plant could be modernised so that 1,400 jobs would be secured. The cost to the local authorities to demolish the plant and build the infrastructure for new industry will be £20m before a single man or woman goes to work!

Dennis and his colleagues understand intransigence from people like BSC chief executive Bob Scholey and chairman, Charles Villiers, who is an old Etonian merchant banker. What shocked the Bilston men to their roots was the craven way in which Labour's Industry Ministers accepted the BSC case. 'Nine out of eleven members of the committee who went to see the Ministers are active Labour Party members,' Dennis Turner says. 'We really gave them a *case* to stop the closure. But the first thing Varley said to me when I met him was: How can we save BSC's face? He cared much more about them than he cared about us. I don't know how these people – Varley, Kaufman and Co – ever got near our movement.'

As a memento of the last years of Bilston steel, Dennis has kept a copy of an order for 2,300 tonnes from a local engineering firm, the London works in Tipton. It is dated 26 February 1979, and is marked: 'Bilston steel specially required'. The order went to BSC's Production Unit at Sheffield but only a sixth of the order was passed back to Bilston. The rest of it was sent instead to Brymbo, a rich private steelworks run by GKN – a major contributor to the Tory Party, with the arch-Tory Lord Brookes as president.

☐ Atrocities like that at Bilston are clear enough proof that this government doesn't deserve to win anything, let alone an election. The only remaining question about the election, then, is: Can Margaret Thatcher still lose it? Against all the odds, she might still do so, especially if she makes the mistake of spelling out her economic policy. Put briefly, this is to return to the 'Selsdon Days' of 1970-71, when the brakes were taken off fringe banking, property speculation and general looting. The economy certainly can't stand the Selsdon orgies now, as most people realise, so unless Thatcher and Co shut up, they could be rumbled. And they *won't* shut up. Last week, at the *Guardian* Young Businessman of the Year lunch, someone called Sir Geoffrey Howe, who is a tax lawyer and is therefore well suited to mastermind the economy for Margaret Thatcher, who is a tax lawyer, launched into a terrific tirade on behalf of the very rich. He pointed out that very very rich people in France and Germany are much better off than such people in Britain and called for tax cuts to put that right. Sir Geoffrey's urbane and educated demeanour occasionally gives the impression that he bases his remarks upon fact. I therefore supply him (free) with some facts about the intolerably heavy burden of taxation in Britain under Labour. These are figures at 1978 prices for the total yield to the government of all capital transfer tax (on gifts between rich people) and all estate duty (on rich dead people) added together.

1972-3 (last full year of the Heath-Thatcher/Howe Tory Government)	£1,057m
1978-9 (last full year of the Labour Government)	£370m

☐ How very suitable that the barracks where members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary beat up suspects should have the same name as the man who first instituted torture as British government policy in Ireland. The first Viscount Castlereagh, who got his title largely because he married the daughter of the Duke of Buckingham, was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland during the rebellion of 1798. He ordered the Royal Exchange, Dublin, to be converted into a torture chamber for the 'interrogation' of arrested rebels. One historian reports that the screams of the tortured could be heard in Castlereagh's office, where they were much appreciated.

After that stirring start to his career, Castlereagh never looked back. He became the dominant figure in the Tory government before and after Waterloo – perhaps the worst government in all British history. His two major triumphs were the barracking of English towns and cities to defend them from their inhabitants, and his pledge at the Congress of Vienna to Britain's seven allies that he would not abolish slavery, even if the British people wanted him to.

When, as the Marquis of Londonderry, he cut his throat in a fit of understandable melancholia, William Cobbett headed his Register with an exultation: 'PEOPLE OF ENGLAND REJOICE! CASTLEREAGH IS DEAD!' And Byron followed him to his grave with the exquisite stanza:

> Posterity will ne'er survey
> A nobler grave than this;
> Here lie the bones of Castlereagh:
> Stop, traveller, and piss.

☐ Dr T. W. Meade, the leader of the Haringey parents who took their council to court for closing the schools during the caretakers' strike, tells me that his son Richard spent four years at Highgate School, which is one of the top public schools in the country. 'Public', of course, in this context means 'private'. Richard has now been moved to William Ellis, a comprehensive school which is not in Haringey, but Camden. The doctor's two daughters go to state schools in Haringey, and he tells me that he is 'very much in favour of state education'. Dr Meade has been offered lots of money by 'political organisations' but, he says, he has turned it all away. All the money has come from individuals, including a lot of MPs. There have been more contributions, apparently, from Labour MPs than from Tory MPs, which is surprising until you remember what a very fashionable place Highgate is, and how many fashionable Labour MPs live there.

Paul Foot

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Leigh Park housewife Mrs Muriel Morris was moved to tears after her morning shopping when the Prince stopped to speak to her. 'He asked if I shopped in Marks and Spencers,' said Mrs Morris, of Linkenholt Way. – *Portsmouth News* (Claudia Sherwood – please send address)

☐ 'In both universities the Wine and Food Societies have been growing steadily,' Jonathan Hippisley from Trinity, the captain of the Cambridge team, told me afterwards. 'Just as in politics, students are turning to the right, so undergraduates are turning from beer to wine.' – *Daily Telegraph* (Adrian Vale)

☐ Viscount Dilhorne, who was one of the three Law Lords dismissing the appeal, said: 'I am unable to reach the conclusion that the ingredients of the offence of publishing a blasphemous libel have changed since 1792.' – *Evening Standard* (Denis Cobell)

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Maggie's Ulster gamble

Sir, It is understandable that in an article which sets out to demonstrate the hypocrisy and cynicism of Mr Callaghan's Northern Ireland policy ('Jim's Ulster gamble', NS 9 March), Patrick Wintour should feel it necessary in passing to aim a few inaccurate arrows at the Conservative Party. As a Conservative administration will be responsible for the government of Northern Ireland in the near future, it would be a pity if your readers believed Patrick Wintour's remark that Mrs Thatcher 'promised majority domination of regional administration' during her visit to Belfast. She did not. Airey Neave has also repeatedly made it plain that a new system of local government in Northern Ireland should be broadly acceptable to both communities.

PHILIP GOODHART

House of Commons

Rolls-Royce's jigsaw

Sir, As a result of your recent production difficulties, your substantial alterations in an article under my name in the NS ('State capitalism 2 – Rolls-Royce', NS 9 March) were not discussed with me before publication. Perhaps you would allow me to correct some of the misleading impressions that arose in consequence.

The article in its original form did not imply that 'world-wide boom' in aerospace was a significant inheritance from the days of private ownership, nor that the upsurge in the world market was readily predictable (obviously it was coming, but it was not easy to foresee when); nor that when Cliff Bore spoke to me it was in the context of the ownership of the aerospace industry, whether private or state.

One paragraph in particular became somewhat garbled, and implied that cash limits on specific projects had caused shortage of manpower for research. This is at odds with my view, which is that the problems handicapping the research capability at Rolls-Royce are a frustrating misdirection of highly-skilled engineers, who are also hopelessly inadequately paid. (Rolls-Royce, unlike Hawker Siddeley, has never sought to make its professional engineers a special case. It rewards them by transferring them into an already overmanned and unwieldy management structure – losing, as the ASTMS succinctly put it, good engineers and gaining bad managers.)

Your rewriting also undermined in several places my obsessive concern to avoid candidature for your 'This English' column, but as it also corrected my unpardonable omission of the hyphen in Rolls-Royce I cannot complain too strongly about that.

PETER KIRKER

Knocknagulliagh
Whitehead
Co. Antrim

Sir, Your article on Rolls-Royce was at best misleading. Your assertion, implicit throughout the article and stated specifically as a conclusion, that Rolls-Royce 'now has to do its thinking through American brains' is blatantly untrue.

We face an increased workload on virtually all fronts – not least, as you point out, in advanced engineering. It is a problem of success, not failure. It is both wise and necessary for us to subcontract a part of our workload 'bulge' over the next few years. This year in advanced engineering we shall subcontract about ten per cent of our work – about one per cent in America. This will rise but is unlikely to reach double figures.

In no cases are we buying complete technology. In effect we are buying in a few bits of a jigsaw puzzle which only we know how to put together to complete the picture. This is exactly what our American competitors do.

Last year alone, another four airlines decided to buy Rolls-Royce RB211-powered aircraft for the first time. These included the American flag-carrier Pan Am and Australia's Qantas. Pan Am said they ordered the RB211 because of its technical superiority. Boeing, by far the world's largest civil aircraft manufacturer, announced the launch of a new aircraft, the 757, with a new version of the RB211. This too was the first time that Boeing has launched a new aircraft with non-American engines. In all, last year Rolls-Royce negotiated deals which could be worth about £2,000 millions in the years ahead. Of course we shall have to subcontract work, both in Britain and abroad.

In the long term your contention that Britain should be alert to 'the urgency of a new approach' in tackling such problems probably has merit. But in the case of Rolls-Royce there is no time for intellectual debate. The opportunities are here now. They require an immediate and pragmatic response.

NIGEL ROWE
Public Affairs Director

Rolls-Royce Ltd
65 Buckingham Gate
London SW1

Bully beef

Sir, The letter from Mr Margolis, the owner of Garners Steak Houses (NS 23 February), naturally wishes to 'question' the facts in your article on the strike. It is a fact that on 12 January last year, about two weeks before the strike began, 94 workers, all of whom were TGWU members, attended a union meeting at 3 am, and that Mr Margolis and his son Geoffrey and his then chief accountant Mr Carlow were sitting in a car outside the meeting noting the names of those who went in. Many workers were advised by this trio that if they went to the union they would have no job.

Margolis said in his letter to you that an 'independent' Gallup Poll showed that a minority of workers wished to be represented by the union. We only point out that this poll took place after the strike began and after the unionised workers who had gone on strike had been sacked. In any case, he paid for the poll and provided the names. Gallup agreed not to make the findings public. ACAS was refused permission to undertake a survey.

As for the wages quoted in your article and denied by Margolis, the figures were accurate for when the strike began. Since then Garners has been forced to increase them because the Wages Council legal minimum has gone up. The strike breakers are also being paid £5 a week 'late duty allowance' for the duration of the strike.

This strike has lasted for over 13 months. We are determined to win this basic right of all workers. To show our determination we are calling a major rally and march on Saturday 24 March.

M. MAHBOOB

Garners Strike Committee
Room 84
12-13 Henrietta Street, London WC2

Boyd's ploy

Sir, John Boyd (Letters 2 March) does not suffer from hallucinations. He could tell Anna Coote the truth, if he chose to do so. TASS has never reneged on any agreement. John Forrester, who, as Deputy General Secretary, accompanied me to the special executive meeting to which Boyd refers, is now dead. While he cannot reply to the accusation of reneging, I can.

As a contrast to Boyd's claim, the then President of AUEW, Hugh Scanlon, correctly reported the decision taken at that meeting. His report is contained in the proceedings of the recalled 1977 national conference. He said: 'The TASS section have endorsed the 1974 proposals; they are anxious and willing to call a conference to consider the 1976 proposals.'

TASS has consistently supported, and still does, the working proposals for amalgamation which were unanimously agreed by the four-section NEC. These proposals included the guarantee of the continuation of the four sections and the election of all *future* officials. Which section has reneged? Only the Engineering section has refused to accept that decision. Boyd's ploy is to rewrite the Worthing proposals to comply with the demands of a narrow majority of the Engineering section's 52-man national committee. TASS has stood by the unanimous decision of its annual conference.

R. MANSFIELD

AUEW-TASS
Richmond, Surrey

Who'd be a poet?

Sir, Without discussing the artistic usefulness or desirability of literary competitions, there are a few points to be made about Blake Morrison's article on the Poetry Society's poetry competition (NS 9 March). The entry money totalled not quite £10,200; one judge is a council member and could not, constitutionally, be rewarded; the anthology had to be printed and the hall hired — off-setting the alleged 'profits' on these activities. The over-all profit on the competition is between £3,500 and £4,000, a sum approximately equivalent to the annual budget for fees and expenses for poets reading each week at the National Poetry Centre.

The Poetry Society has long survived on the income from verse-speaking examinations. This source is largely drying up as changes are carried out in our education department, so others have to be found to supplement our Arts Council grant if we are to continue to interest children in poetry, have regular poetry readings, produce (and pay contributors to) *Poetry Review*, run a bookshop and a printshop, and house and service the National Poetry Secretariat. 'Serving poetry' usually means helping poets to survive financially. Any new activities financed out of the competition will have this as a prime objective.

VICKY ALLEN

Poetry Society
21 Earls Court Square, London SW5

The BBC's national interest

Sir, Last week's touching exchange between Gerard Mansell and Christopher Hitchens over the BBC Iranian Service recalled some of the problems which the Foreign Office and BBC Greek Service used to face during the Colonels' time.

The British Embassy in Athens had a good record with British journalists but it was, of course, embarrassing for it to host opponents of the regime at the same Queen's birthday parties as leading bully boy Fattakos – now in prison. It must have been painful to cross Lady Fleming's name off such lists, just as it must have been painful for the FCO now and then to demand 'more balance' from the BBC. To its credit, the BBC was always far from convinced.

Matters became more complicated after 1974. In a series from Cyprus for the Greek Service in 1975 I chanced to report comments by the Cypriot government spokesman which were less than fulsome about the British. The British Embassy in Athens angrily called me in to say that what I broadcast had to be in 'the national interest' – a requirement which I found is indeed imposed on the BBC External Services by their part paymasters, the FCO. The BBC later echoed this anger and, with regard to Greece, reminded me that Wilson, bestowing honours in his careful way, considered Karamanlis deserved a Nobel Prize for democracy.

My letter on these points never received a written reply. Seven months later the BBC South European Service told me it no longer required files separate from my normal BBC coverages and would 'revert to normal Bush House practice'. This, I was told, was purely in the interests of economy. I thus always thought that only a churl could connect that decision with FCO complaints over Cyprus or my reports that Greece housed other views as well as those of Karamanlis.

DAVID TONGE

London N6

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

See How They Run

To, I can only hope, the general amazement and continued delight of the reading public, the delicate instrument which, for want of a less vainglorious word, I refer to as my mind never ceases to range widely, darting now into this corner, now into that, tirelessly questing, evaluating and sifting information and it has just recently been occupying itself with wondering what on earth can have gone on at the auditions for *Oh! Calcutta!* This entertainment, which I here explain for the benefit of those country dwellers who can no longer afford to, in the 30s phrase, 'crash up to town and do a show' and may therefore be out of touch with what is brightest and best in the theatre world, is a thoughtful dramatic work in, I gather, a sort of revue form and from the pen of Kenneth Tynan, late (or perhaps still) of our National Theatre. The box-office receipts must have made him a cosy nest-egg (the piece is also, I believe, still running in New York) to pop into that tin trunk under the bed alongside his share of what seemed at the time to be those generous South Bank salaries. This offering at the Duchess Theatre is now in its ninth triumphant year in London and has been much helped, who can doubt, by a phrase supplied by the *Daily Telegraph* critic of the day who, ever anxious to alert the public to the arrival of an interesting novelty, went on record as saying that 'The nudity is stunning'.

I have not yet seen the play (with so many theatrical delights available, something has had to go) and am therefore for the time being unstunned but I am only too happy to take a critic's word for it. In the normal way and with so many performers, and good ones too, sadly out of work, the assembling of a cast presents no problem but this undertaking of which I write can hardly have been, in the fullest sense, normal. Whatever happened? I don't *need* to know, mind you, but to those of us who love the theatre, no detail is superfluous. Did actresses give of their tuneful best ('Waltz of My Heart' perhaps from *The Dancing Years*), only to hear a voice say from the darkness of the stalls, 'That was lovely, Bella dear, but you do realise that it doesn't tell us quite enough.' Did the actors declaim a speech or two from Shakespeare and then line up, tallest on the right, shortest on the left, and at the polite request 'And now, er . . .' every pair of jeans tumbled to the ground? A director would, understandably, have to know all there was to know and an outwardly personable and handsome man might well be concealing a singularly unsightly and unattractive tattoo, or something. However, whatever method was employed of getting at the facts and of finding out what was what and who had which by taking a look in undraped conditions (my jovial Devon friends, the Bultitudes, would here make use of the jocular word 'starkers'), it seems to have worked a treat.

Or, and in another sense, has it? People who work in the commercial theatre, as opposed to those who elsewhere find themselves comfortably cushioned theatrically by the state and are thereby less perilously concerned with box-office takings, are in it to make money. Although some actors chafe at long runs (the distinguished Sir Johnstone Forbes-Robertson, landed with a smash hit called *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*, used to pace the wings dressed as Christ and muttering 'Oh, this *bloody* play!'), managers are naturally disinclined to end them while there is still a bob or two to be wrung from audiences.

After it had been running for three years I went, ten minutes before curtain-time, to a matinée of *Salad Days*, announcing airily at the box-office window that I wanted a seat well forward in the stalls, and centre. There was a sharp and shocked intake of breath from the guichet and after a pause a hand came out proffering a ticket marked Q 18, or whatever, and a reproving voice said 'You're very lucky. It's the last one.' In *The Mousetrap*'s Seventh Sensational Year I ventured into a well-filled matinée made memorable (for me) by a male neighbour who had plainly lunched rather well and who, as the curtain rose, kept repeating loudly 'It was the butler who did it,' inaccurate information rightly answered with hisses of 'Sh!' from all around. And I was taken by my parents to what must have been approximately the 2,000th performance of *Chu-Chin-Chow*, the marvellous musical extravaganza at what was then His Majesty's Theatre and which, in addition to containing an impressively large actor called Oscar Asche who had written the play, featured a real live camel. Fond of animals as I was, I assumed that it had a straw bed in the wings, was fed on bananas and was led out at intervals, like a dog, into the Haymarket to achieve its No 1 and No 2.

But the trouble with long runs is, paradoxically, that they fill theatres and tie them up, sometimes with pieces that are not exactly in the topmost class dramatically. Agatha Christie, though never one willingly to cause a mischief, successfully immobilised the charming little Ambassadors Theatre, scene of those brilliant and life-saving Alan Melville wartime revues which so happily transformed the unusual (to say the very least of it) Miss Gingold into a big star, for what seemed to be almost endless years, a run which was then switched to the equally charming and slightly smaller St Martin's and where *The Mousetrap* is still performing a similar shut-out service. And Mrs Christie doesn't stop there for the tiny Fortune Theatre, still ringing in one's happy memory with the magic of Flanders and Swann, has had, for the last four years, a murder going on at its vicarage. And what about elsewhere? Will the Palace Theatre, divinely filled with worshippers night after night, ever remove (if that verb isn't too sacrilegious) Jesus Christ and provide a refuge for, say, a musical such as Kern's supremely elegant *The Cat and the Fiddle*? The Strand Theatre is housing 'The Longest-Running Comedy in the World', its saucy title seeming to suggest that the stolid British are not interested in sex (some people will have news for it). We have now all become accustomed to Drury Lane being regularly out of reach for three and four years at a time. Long runs would appear to be on the increase, a misleadingly 'healthy' theatrical sign.

It was by no means always so. Digging and delving in the invaluable 'Who's Who in the Theatre', a cornucopia of fascinating fact and which at one time used to give startling and often saddening details of theatrical wills and the wretchedly small sums that even the most outwardly prosperous had left (Ziegfeld, Nil; Oscar Asche, £20; Ben Greet, £127; H. M. Tennent, £1,099), what does one find? Before 1822 no play had ever notched up 100 nights (matinées are a relatively recent invention and started – will Ladies please Remove Their Hats – about 1870), though the first production of *The Beggar's Opera* in 1728 had a respectable run of 62 performances at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, with the merry tunes disturbing barristers poring late over their briefs and reverberating round chambers. The first to score a glorious century was a comic drama based on London life and called, of all things, *Tom and Jerry*.

It will be noted that in general nothing very intellectually powerful makes the long life grade. Music and laughter (and why not indeed?) are the best ingredients for longevity. Looking back over the triumphant 1,000 timers, what wonderful remembered pleasures there are – *Blithe Spirit*, with dear Margaret Rutherford's jaw wobbling so merrily up and down, *Oklahoma!*, the musical that changed it all, *The Maid of the Mountains*, with possibly the best and most exciting 'theatre voice' of all time, that of José Collins, *The Farmer's Wife*, with Cedric Hardwicke knee-deep in Devonshire cream as Churdles Ash. And a charming play, *The Wind and the Rain*, about medical students and with Robert Harris and the then less well known actress called Celia Johnson. Come to think of it, that play was at the St Martin's too. Oh well.

Roger Woddis

Sympathy

'Things change so terribly fast these days. Look at the Shah of Iran poor man.' – The Queen Mother.

If only seasons never altered,
If only things remained the same,
If only roses bloomed forever
  And moths survived the flame!

I weep into my sleepless pillow
To see the Peacock overthrown,
And feel his tragic loss as keenly
  As if it were my own.

If only reeds were never broken,
If only time and tide stood still!
I pray the worst may never happen,
  But rather fear it will.

If only we could be quite certain
The rest of us were here to stay!
The fear of change perplexes monarchs,
  As Milton used to say.

But while his plight evokes our pity,
We should at least give heartfelt thanks
That something salvaged from the wreckage
  Is safe in foreign banks.

And I for one shall count my blessings,
And close my ears to distant drums,
While there is yet a special fortune
  That smiles on Royal mums.

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Know and Grow Vegetables

P. J. Salter and J. K. A. Bleasdale

No, you do *not* need green fingers to produce good vegetable crops. What you do need is the professional approach, and that you can learn from this book. The authors are on the staff of the National Vegetable Research Station in Warwickshire; their simple instructions and practical advice are based on modern scientific research and will work in everyone's garden. £3.95 *Oxford Paperbacks* £1.95 *22 March*

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E. R. Norman

Rarely have Reith Lectures inspired so much controversy as these. In them, Dr Norman considers the contemporary politicization of Christianity – from Latin American Marxist Christians to Christianity in the Soviet Union – and identifies the social and political ideas to which the modern Church is attaching itself. £3.50 *Oxford Paperbacks* £1.50

Liberty and Language

Geoffrey Sampson

Chomsky, argues Geoffrey Sampson, takes too narrow a view of language, and the system of political beliefs deriving from his view involves the total subordination of individuals to a collective will. *Liberty and Language* is a blast in favour of classic liberalism and it claims that Chomsky is wrong, in his linguistics and his politics. £5.75 *22 March*

Jury Trials

John Baldwin and Michael McConville

In analysing a series of jury trials heard in Birmingham and in London in 1975 and 1976, the authors identify a large number of questionable acquittals and a smaller but more disturbing number of doubtful convictions. They demonstrate the deficiencies of current appeal procedures and present new evidence on controversies such as the success of professional criminals before juries and the social composition of the juries themselves. £4.95

The Oxford History of English Art

Volume XI: 1870–1940

Dennis Farr

A central theme in this volume is the breakdown of the old academic tradition and the increasing importance of those innovators who worked outside the established art societies. Illustrated £17.50 *22 March*

Aleksandr Blok: A Biography

Volume I: The Distant Thunder 1880–1908

Avril Pyman

'Perhaps Dr Pyman's rarest merit is to combine great empathy and sharp if benevolent irony in her approach to Blok and the strange company he kept . . . . she strikes a shrewd balance; at moments in her story we laugh aloud, but laugh painfully.' *The Guardian.* Illustrated £12.95

Turgenev: His Life and Times

Leonard Schapiro

'His main aim, successfully realized, has been to set Turgenev's life and art in the context of the social and political controversies of his age . . . . There is not a dull page . . . . His way of viewing Turgenev is admirably suited to his purpose; he likes and respects him, but sees him with clear eyes.' *The Guardian.* Illustrated £12.50

Mungo Park, the African Traveler

Kenneth Lupton

This is a new life of Mungo Park, the Scottish explorer who made two pioneering journeys into the interior of West Africa before his mysterious death at the rapids near Bussa in 1806. It reveals him as much more than the stereotype explorer, for he was perceptive and sympathetic in his encounters with Africans. Illustrated £7.50

Maria Pasqua

Magdalen Goffin

The daughter of Italian peasants, Maria Pasqua was taken to Paris at the age of six, where she was spectacularly successful as an artists' model before being adopted by the Comtesse de Noailles, an eccentric Englishwoman. Her extraordinary story is told through family letters and diaries by her granddaughter. Illustrated £4.95

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'Excellent book. He has managed to bring to bear on a highly topical subject learning which is genuine and which can be read with ease and even pleasure by any serious citizen . . . . Where I think Mr Bogdanor is at his best is in dealing with the issues now actually before us.' Max Beloff in the *Daily Telegraph.* £5.50 papers cover £2.95 OPUS

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Here is a dispassionate, fully researched history of the course of the Vietnam War. It is the first systematic analysis of it, and the first to use the 'classified defense information' in the archives of the American military services which reveal a war far more complex in motives and results than has been previously disclosed. £9.50

Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence

G. A. Cohen

'An unusually interesting piece of work . . . . sets itself severe standards of intellectual honesty and intellectual rigour, and lives up to them quite admirably.' Alan Ryan in *New Society.* 'Admirable and formidable book.' E. J. Hobsbawm in the *New Statesman.* £10.50

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SPRING BOOKS

Russell Davies

The Dharma Bums

Jack's Book by BARRY GIFFORD and LAWRENCE LEE *Hamish Hamilton* £8.50
The Third Mind by WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS and BRION GYSIN *John Calder* £5.95

It is fitting that an author whose garrulity became his guiding literary principle should be commemorated by a book in which his friends shoot their mouths off into a tape-recorder. And, since Jack Kerouac is thought of by many of his intimates as The Great Rememberer, there was something to live up to when Messrs Gifford and Lee turned on their little machine. Their scheme has worked out well, on the whole. The talkers who are short on biographical relevance tend to be long on style, or, failing style, 'flavour':

> *Lucien Carr:* It must have been an old 1936 Ford. In the middle of the fucking winter. And I got over to East St Louis, and when we went back to the car, the car was cold, and I said, 'Well, I'll heat up this car.' I was gonna get it *warm* in there – until the fuckin' front of the car *exploded*! And the hood comes up to let the head out, right? I mean the car was fucked up, that was it for the car. Leave it where it was.

Yup, sounds like curtains for the car. It's odd, incidentally, that the Beats, who wrote off the nearest point they could get to the top of their heads, never reliably captured the humour that attaches itself naturally to the spoken word. Their genius for repetition took them another way. Kerouac wrote particularly spotty dialogue; but then many of his friends were less interested in saying than in doing:

> *Peter Orlovsky:* One night Jack was dead drunk, and me and Allen tried to cheer him up, and we both blew him. He said, 'What are you doing that for? I'm not gay, I'm not queer.' I said, 'Oh, we're just trying to make you happy, Jack.' He couldn't even get a hard-on 'cause he was so drunk.

It is not beyond imagining that Kerouac, far from being clinically unarousable, was simply not much excited by the eager ministrations of these do-gooders. But in order to speculate plausibly on such a matter, one needs to go back almost to the beginning of the story – to New York in the early Forties, where Allen Ginsberg (the Allen of the failed-fellation story, naturally) was just beginning to act as the unofficial historian, secretary and hot-water-bottle to the group that would later become the Beats.

Ginsberg, at this time beardless, ripe-faced and rather hopelessly teenage, was awed and amazed by Kerouac, 'because I'd never met a big jock who was sensitive and intelligent about poetry'. It was indeed on a football scholarship that Kerouac had come from his home town of Lowell, Mass., to the Horace Mann School, with a view to making the team at Columbia; and even though the sporting ambitions soon evaporated, it was to take a good 20 years of accelerating dissipation to bury the physique Ginsberg so much admired under a mound of alcoholic fat. Kerouac was admired, of course, by both sexes, and from the start seems to have moved bisexually among people content to share him. He became the spare corner in many a real or fancied triangle, as was inevitable in a group already organised with incest aforethought.

The chief catalyst here was certainly William Burroughs, whose flirtations with stimulants were at this stage as much emotional as medicinal. Burroughs enjoyed living in violent atmospheres, and violence every so often succeeded in breaking out around him. Thus it was, in 1944, that Burroughs's friend David Kammerer propositioned Lucien Carr, a friend of Ginsberg's, on the banks of the Hudson; he was stabbed by Carr, weighted, and rolled into the river. This was murder in the second degree. Much later, in Mexico, Burroughs himself was to kill his wife Joan with a pistol from close range as she balanced a glass on her head in a game of William Tell; the death was ruled accidental. But looking back on the Columbia days, Allen Temko, a fellow student, thinks he saw it coming:

> I knew then he was capable of killing someone. They were all very unattractive in that way. The level of violence was high, and Kerouac liked that, and Ginsberg liked it, but it horrified me. It was very Dostoevski.

Temko is possibly right in hinting that the Burroughs group, in part, was guiltily playing at the war in which they were not engaged. Kerouac had been a merchant seaman briefly, but had been honourably discharged from the Navy on grounds of 'indifferent character'. According to Gifford and Lee, he told the Naval psychiatrist that he conceded guilt, but 'perceived his malady as an inherent inability to accept discipline'.

The Burroughs coterie was now offering increased opportunities for the exercise of just such an inability. New members had arrived. One, Herbert Huncke, a homosexual prostitute, drug-runner, thief and fence, must have seemed satisfactorily dangerous at the time, and in fact almost got the tremulous Ginsberg shopped on a receiving charge. He was certainly symbolic of the group's desire to be part of an underworld (which lives on, for example, in the title of Kerouac's short novel *The Subterraneans*). But in his present-day photo, Huncke looks a cosy old sweetheart in striped shirt, turtle neck and baggy-hip trousers; his walls are lined with books; so perhaps the influence went mostly in the other direction. It would be hard to say the same of Neal Cassady, who was introduced to the Columbia set about the same time.

Cassady, for whom the standard tag is 'car-thief Adonis of Denver', was one of those unaccountable figures who, by spending half their adolescence in the poolhall and half in the town library, build themselves into philosopher-bums, wastrels with a rationale. Cassady was also a neurotic mover-on, a passer-on of women, and an all-round manipulator and con-artist. Of all the balls he tried to keep in the air, two were very conspicuously his own, and he overworked them. There is one especially hilarious/dreadful scene in a Denver hotel where Cassady's own Interstate bedroom farce catches up with him: two of his wives, *and* his doting bedwarmer Ginsberg, turn up together and Cassady has to explain himself simultaneously to all three. Cassady notoriously used his sexuality as a bargaining point, and the testimony of Gore Vidal suggests that he passed on the strategy to Kerouac.

At the same time, as John Clellon Holmes points out, Cassady 'had to capacity to make . . . some kinds of people feel inauthentic'. Holmes is thinking of his own unease, but the point applies at a deeper level to Kerouac. For when fame came, it was as much – more – on account of the style of life Kerouac appeared to promote than for the literary means he used. And the style of life in question, the *On the Road* existence, was really Cassady's. To be sure, they both travelled, sometimes together and sometimes meeting up – down at good old Bill Burroughs's place in Algiers, Louisiana, say, where Burroughs's wife Joan, a benzedrine addict, would spend her wakeful nights scraping lizards off a moonlit garden tree, while by day Burroughs practised shooting at Joan's empty glass capsules. But whereas Cassady would never rest (he ended up roaring his life away with Ken Kesey's Merry Pranksters, cast as the 'hammer-flipper'; he can be seen in this book, a hollowed, amphetamined figure, flipping a heavy metal hammer in his right hand), Kerouac felt the need to return and rest. Sometimes it was in the false, exhausting oblivion of the city, and sometimes, just as dangerously, in the shrine of the past, where the spirit of his saintly elder brother Gerard (dead at nine, of rheumatic fever) presided among the glowing images of the family Catholicism.

If Kerouac had been a real roamer, he could have roamed free of fame; but the success of *On the Road* caught him flat-footed and swept him off to a party. It trapped him in bars. It came by the car-load to the home he shared with his mother, and dragged him off on another spree. He was more bewildered than unwilling. His moments of respite, those that were not spent in headlong, remorseless writing (if the urge to keep moving possessed Kerouac anywhere, it was at his typewriter) were devoted to febrile researches into a Buddhism which, like Catholicism, provided chiefly the comfort of instruction, couched in incantatory forms.

It seems hard to believe, but Kerouac almost made it through the Sixties. He stayed drunk. His relations with the West Coast – Rexroth, Big Sur and all that – were just another strain. He made horrible appearances on TV shows, notably William F. Buckley's. (As a conservative-through-infantilism, Kerouac supported Buckley, but made a mess of his show, insulting two guests and interrupting what flow there was by leaping to his feet and singing 'The Flat-foot Floogie with the floy floy!' for reasons known not even to

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himself.) In 1966, he married again, for the third time: a more motherly person than the others, even though his real mother, 'Mémère', was still alive. Jack and Mémère are seen photographed together in the shadows of their home. Kerouac's friend Michael McClure comments:

> I've seen photographs of dominant mother-monkeys with their male offspring, who are called 'princes' in that condition. That is the photograph of a dominant female anthropoid with her prince.

For McClure, evidently a Platonist, 'it was beautiful . . . a classic primate situation existed there'. To almost any other eye, I fancy, the picture is an overwhelmingly grieving image of failure and retreat. Kerouac's end was unprincely. He was watching *The Galloping Gourmet* as the fatal haemorrhage began.

The terrible Burroughs ('very reptilian, but brilliant' – Allan Temko) persists. He has teamed up with a smirky egotist painter called Gysin, who has encouraged him in the belief that cutting up pre-existent prose is better than writing new stuff. 'Cut this page now,' enjoined Gysin, riskily. 'Cut-ups are for everyone. Anybody can make cut-ups,' says Burroughs, rightly. At one point he takes the scissors to some old reviews of his work: 'John Wain, Philip Toynbee, Anthony Quinton (whoever he may be)'. Well, he's welcome to hack at this if he pleases. He pleases hack well. If he's well hack this. It's quite fun if you've *absolutely nothing else to do.*

Jonathan Raban

Raw Material

Robert Lowell: Life and Art by STEVEN GOULD AXELROD *Princeton* $14.50

Pity the biographical critic who takes on Robert Lowell. He has a crushingly experienced rival in the field. For Lowell spent his entire literary career in writing what amounts to his own exhaustive critical biography. His collected poems are his Authorised Life; and Lowell himself found his life a peculiarly volatile and intractable substance. His poems strain at every line's-end in the struggle to contain it.

The turmoil is insistently there on the page. The barest reading of the poems draws one into a world of continuous bone-shaking turbulence. Lowell wrote simply about what he knew, but what he knew was complication and difficulty. He never cultivated obscurity as some of his contemporaries did; obscurity, however, tended to cultivate Robert Lowell, and in his poems he makes the business of ordinary living look like tightrope-walking – an art which calls for the utmost guile, grace and concentration. There is not a moment in his work when we are out of sight of large, terribly legible warnings of what happens to those who stumble: the gates of the mental asylum; the smashed marriage; the chemical void of depression. Nor are these merely warnings. In Lowell's poems, falling is the daily occupational risk of being human, and the flight of thankful joy on one page presages the arrival of the men from the locked ward on the next.

Perhaps Lowell led no more than an averagely rumpled life. Its distinction lay not in the extremes which it touched and his poetry registered but in the extraordinary status he accorded to it. It was to be the material for a modern Ulyssean epic – an epic of lost battles and wrong turnings. By all normal odds, the project should have turned out to be an egotistic folly, but Lowell had extraordinary qualifications for the job. He had a tremendous gift for comedy (his critics, a deadly solemn crew, rarely notice that his poems about himself are actually very funny; Ulysses is only half a step away from Sancho Panza). His intelligence was exact and playful. He was superbly well-read, and carried his learning with easy assurance. He had a pure genius for language unrivalled by any poet since Yeats.

We can look back now over the completed epic, which started in 1944 with *Land of Unlikeness* and ended last year with the posthumous publication of *Day by Day*. Inevitably, there is a price to be paid for Lowell's determination to settle for nothing less than greatness. There are passages of windy bluster, odd lurches into bathos, lines so clogged with the attempt to load them with meaning that they lie on the page swollen, inert, beyond comprehension. Yet on balance the enterprise reveals itself as a triumph of nerve and calculation. Here is an exemplary 20th-century life with an exemplary measure of muddle and defeat, an exemplary measure of passing glory. It's a life lived in full conscience by a man of preternatural quickness and sensitivity and candour. We can all count ourselves lucky that Lowell happened to be around in our messy stretch of history; more than any other writer he has got down on paper what it feels like to be morally alive in our particular snakepit.

In his last ten years, in *Notebook* and after, he burrowed into the sources and techniques of his own writing with the same searching precision as he used to excavate the rest of his life. In a succession of poems-about-poems he tried to tease out what was going on in his work. He revised, then revised his revisions, as if somehow the literary critic in him might discover what the autobiographer had missed. He had been schooled in the heyday of the New Criticism, and the general temper of his mind was instinctively critical, in the reflexive, speculative style of Tate, Winters, Jarrell, Empson and Richards. Many of his later poems resemble a new *Seven Types of Ambiguity* in verse, in which Lowell's own poetry provides the raw material for a polemical, and often dazzling, critical inquiry.

It was all part of the same epic enterprise. There is a rage for explanation in Lowell's work, an obsessive conviction that somewhere there must be clues to be decoded, that experience, however impossibly tangled, can be made intelligible.

> For
> the hundredth time, we slice the fog, and round
> the village with our headlights on the ground,
> like the first philosopher Thales who thought
> all things water,
> and fell in a well . . . trying to find a car
> key . . . It can't be here, and so it must
> be there . . .

A life so fully written, and a work so fully annotated, leave very little space for the latecoming critic. Yet a really good critical biography of Lowell would be an immensely valuable book. For Lowell is a bewildering figure. His poems show him bewildered by himself. It's easy to know the 'Robert Lowell' who is the hero of the epic, but the man who created him remains stubbornly outside the grasp of the poems. Lowell ransacked his own memory in the attempt to come to terms with this troubling character; he tried to hunt him down in history; finally he tried to pin him out with criticism. The results were inconclusive. There is a magnificent body of poetry which Lowell left behind in the process of his search; yet at the end of it all there's a tantalising blank where Lowell himself ought to be.

At this point, Steven Gould Axelrod steps in on cue. *Robert Lowell: Life and Art* is the first book on Lowell to be completed since his death. As its pre-emptive title suggests, it promises great things in the way of general perspectives and long-term critical assessments. With Lowell dead, the time has come for tape-measures and post-mortems. Biography, though, unlike the undertaking business, involves a direct encounter between two lives; and it's not wholly irrelevant to inspect what Axelrod lets fall about his own.

He is an associate professor at the University of California, Riverside campus. His book on Lowell has occupied him for, we gather, six years. This has not, happily, been a solitary labour: he acknowledges the help of 'my wonderful research assistants, Joyce McLean and Denis Jones'. Eleven scholarly colleagues have been through his manuscript for him, and 'saved me from more errors and infelicities than I like to . . .' etcetera. Librarians from 20 libraries have been bustling in the stacks on his behalf, while the Riverside Research Committee has chipped in with a helpful wad of greenbacks. Axelrod's acknowlegments page offers a telling, if sketchy, self-portrait of the author as academic corporation man. That by no means disqualifies him for the job on hand, but it does point up the gulf which lies between the world of Steven Gould Axelrod and that of Robert Lowell.

This gulf comes to seem ever more important as one reads on. For Axelrod has made sense, of an academic, corporation kind, of Lowell's grandly dishevelled life. He has turned it into a Horatio Alger story, about a poor boy from an unhappy family who wanted to make good in the world of poetry and eventually succeeded in achieving tenure at the state university of Parnassus. It's quite a touching story in its way, and it at least has the virtue of dogged simplicity.

The early chapters are about Learning To Write. The young Lowell was in search of Teachers who would also serve as Substitute Father Figures. He was lucky to find two of these undoubtedly useful characters in Allen Tate and William Carlos Williams. Tate taught him 'the disciplined ecstasy' of 'the poetic act'; Williams 'persuaded Lowell to trust in the authority of the self'. The big problem on young Cal's agenda was to get all

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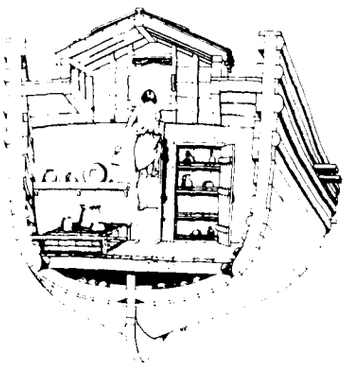

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this together; it was hard going for the youthful poet as he tried to trust in the disciplined ecstasy of the authority of the self while it was engaged in the poetic act. Nevertheless, these were exciting times, and like Alger's Tattered Tom he stuck to his task. Occasionally we are afforded privileged glimpses into the Poet's Mind: 'In Maine, his mind churned with the new ideas he had encountered and with the new possibilities they seemed to open up.' Sometimes, though, all this churning proves too much for our hero. 'The intensity of this creative surge sent him back for a brief rest at McLean's.'

'A brief rest at McLean's' is Axelrod's coy euphemism for a period of forced incarceration in a mental hospital during an attack of mania. Perhaps Axelrod means to be tactful – if so his tact is surely misplaced. These recurrent bouts of temporary insanity brought Lowell down once a year for more than 20 years. They humbled and weakened him in life; in his poetry, they were made to serve his purpose. His illness defines the margin of the habitable world, while the 'myopia' of insanity is a way of seeing which Lowell uses again and again in his work – a bemused and solitary form of vision to which the sane are just as much prone as the mad. In one phrase, Axelrod both devalues Lowell's illness and makes it one of those romantic diseases which only poets catch: it is brought on by 'the intensity' of a 'creative surge'. It wasn't.

In the story, Lowell recovers from his brief rest and publishes *Life Studies*. The book, says Axelrod in the pop-eyed tones of a drum-majorette, 'became the poetry event of the year'. It's a little hard to see why, since in Axelrod's lengthy examination of its contents *Life Studies* 'affirms the value of human experience'. One would have thought that it would have been more of an event had it denied it.

Axelrod's method, such as it is, is most clearly on display in the long chapter he devotes to *The Dolphin*. In his discussions of the earlier works, he is able to rely heavily on other critics of Lowell, especially on Hugh B. Staples, Marjorie Perloff and Jerome Mazzaro. With *The Dolphin*, Axelrod is out on his own, a solitary critical voyager in the wilderness of literature which has not yet been established on the syllabus. He wades through the book, poem by poem, reducing Lowell's life and lines to a prose garble which is pure, 22-carat Axelrod.

> Lowell arrives in England in early 1970 and takes up residence on Redcliffe Square in the Earl's Court section of London. The mid-Victorian buildings take getting used to, for they are foreign and ugly. But they are also curiously familiar. They are the image of Lowell himself.

Well, Lowell did look a bit odd, I suppose, but not *that* odd . . .

> On a stormy night soon after arriving in London, Lowell becomes reacquainted with Caroline, whom he first met years before in New York. The two begin an affair which is at first sensually pleasing but emotionally 'estranged', so estranged that he contemplates Aztec rites of human sacrifice . . .

This fascinating allegation is, alas, not justified by the text. Axelrod has mixed up (and misread) two different sonnets.

> The elegiac tone deepens; his wings contract. His new life has come to seem rather uncomfortable.

One would imagine so: contracting wings is a notoriously painful condition.

> Lowell's doctors love him and wish he would stay always . . . Caroline, however, does not love him any longer.

Nevertheless, this really is an Alger story, and we can all feel a warm glow at the end:

> After a lifetime of kicking against the pricks, Lowell in a moment of spiritual insight, unconditionally accepts his world and himself.

After which Axelrod goes on to a cursory disfiguration of *Day by Day*.

Robert Lowell: Life and Art is laughably inadequate. It is hard to imagine how anyone could write a worse book about Lowell, and it will soon, no doubt, be supplanted by better ones. Yet Axelrod's grotesque failure, with his two wonderful research assistants, his six years' hard labour, his army of advisers and his travels through the university libraries of America, stands as a minatory warning to the critics and biographers who are going to follow in his path. His book serves much the same purpose as a particularly bloody road-accident seen at the beginning of a long car journey.

For many of the causes of Axelrod's failure lie in the nature of the subject. Lowell's poetry resists criticism precisely because it incorporates an extremely delicate and sophisticated critical system into the texture of the verse itself. His life has already been phrased in the poems, with more resonance and authority than any biographer is ever likely to attain. There remains a great deal which is undescribed, unexplained and perplexing. I doubt if anyone who knew Lowell well would claim to have understood him. He was, in the deepest sense, an unknowable man. It would indeed be a fine thing if criticism and biography were able to make him more accessible; it is more likely, I suspect, that he will prove to be a kind of Bermuda Triangle of modern literature, in which more and more earnest Axelrods will disappear without trace.

Allan Prior

'. . . a hearty celebration of the Edwardian musical hall by an author with ancestral roots in the business.' — THE OBSERVER

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The King's Head

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The narrator is Colonel Hakim Félix Ellelloû, who is writing his memoirs as President (or ex-President – we are kept wondering till the end) of Kush, an African state, formerly the French colony of Noire, on the southern edge of the Sahara. When the French granted the country independence in 1968, they established a puppet monarchy which Ellelloû overthrew by a revolutionary coup. But as the story begins, his 'Marxist-Islamic' regime is threatened by a catastrophic drought.

Ellelloû is a man of powerful will and inflexible principle. 'The Famine exists, and therefore must have a meaning both Marxist and divine,' he tells his more pragmatic Minister of the Interior, Ezena; and like a quest-hero of old, he dedicates himself to discovering that meaning, scorning the expedient of accepting American aid. In the first episode of the novel, he arrogantly ignites a huge stockpile of American food (mostly, to be sure, unnutritious or unsuitable) placed enticingly just across the border of his state, incidentally incinerating an important American official.

Back in his capital, Ellelloû takes counsel with his ambitious mistress Katunda and the third of his four wives, the sophisticated and athletic chieftain's daughter Settina; wanders the streets in disguise; tries to make rain, or at least distract the starving population by personally executing the ex-King in the public square. Ellellou describes these things with an eloquence that combines Gallic poise with African sensuousness; but there is a third strain of allusion running through his discourse that teases the reader with the question of his past. The King's head on his execution block, for instance, reminds him of 'a candy-apple such as one buys in country fairs in Wisconsin – its tough glaze, its slender wooden stick, its white cap of coconut'; and afterwards it is held up by his bodyguard 'at arm's length, as the centre of an opposing basketball team demonstrates his intimidating one-handed grip'.

It transpires that Ellelloû in fact spent four crucial years in America, as a student on a Mid-Western campus, during which time he became a Muslim, developed a deep (but not pure) scorn for the values of the consumer society, and acquired a white American wife (his second, his first being an African earth-mother). Flashbacks filling out these trans-atlantic experiences are intercut with the riveting account of a gruelling expedition into the torrid interior with his fourth wife, the delectable Sheba, in search of the abducted head of the King, rumoured to be speaking oracles in

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a cave. What the head (wired up with Russian electronics, and scripted by the disloyal Ezena) says is that Ellelloû is psychologically and ideologically disturbed, projecting his own love-hate relationship with American culture on to his suffering people. The diagnosis is plausible, but the reader is left wondering whether the economic mainspring of the latest coup (for that is what is happening) – exploitation of newly discovered oil – really promises a better future for Kush.

The novel is also a coup for its author: daringly conceived and brilliantly carried off. No one has ever doubted that Updike was an extravagantly gifted writer, but the life of his books has often been suffocated by the lovingly-stitched quilting of his style. Writing realistic novels of suburban-domestic middle-class life in the Eastern states of America, but striving honourably to achieve at the same time a lyric intensity in their verbal texture, Updike lavished upon the thought-streams of salesmen, stockbrokers and housebuilders a range of vocabulary and fertility of metaphor that most professional writers would envy, thus dissipating the illusion of life he had laboured to create. In *The Coup*, this surplus verbal energy finds a wonderfully productive outlet. Unbalanced or not, Ellelloû is an exceptional man, who strives to be an authentic hero. The extravagance and virtuosity of his rhetoric matches and expresses his character, while the exoticism of the story and its setting suspends whatever lurking disbelief we might have.

Not that the setting lacks solidity of specification. Drought-tormented Kush, with its parched plains and simmering deserts, its 22 miles of railroad and 107 of paved highway, shrivelled peanut crops and patiently suffering camels, is so real that it is hard to believe that Updike made it up out of books and the impressions of a single Fulbright lecture tour. And *The Coup* is full of a wry political wisdom, the ironies and contradictions of colonialism and its aftermath vividly illuminated by being seen from an unfamiliar perspective – one of those populist military dictators so often propelled to power in modern Africa, whom we tend glibly to dismiss as simply evil or simply insane. Perhaps the greatest achievement of this novel is that it allows us to enter imaginatively into the consciousness of such leaders, and see the unflattering image of ourselves there. Here, for example, is Ellelloû haranguing the crowd on the possibility of American exploitation of Kush oil:

> What does the capitalist infidel make, you may ask, of the priceless black blood of Kush? He extracts from it, of course, a fuel that propels him and his overweight, quarrelsome family – so full of sugar and starch their faces fester – back and forth on purposeless errands and ungratefully received visits. Rather than live as we do in the same village with our kin and our labour, the Americans have flung themselves wide across the land, which they have buried under tar and stone . . . they make from your sacred blood slippery green bags in which they place their garbage and even the leaves that fall from their trees! . . . Of your blood they make deodorants to mask their god-given body scents and wax for their matches to ignite their death-dealing cigarettes and more wax to shine their shoes while the people of Kush tread upon the burning sands barefoot!

Thus, by the same stroke, the familiar is defamiliarised (and so freshly perceived) and the alien made intelligible. The reader may be reminded fleetingly of Durrell, of Waugh's African novels, and of Nabokov, but *The Coup* is very much Updike's own book, one that manages to extend our sympathies in the great tradition of the realistic novel, while being thoroughly modern in its artfulness and ironies. One could hardly ask for more.

Arthur Marshall

Sourpuss

Three Cornish Cats by A. L. ROWSE *Weidenfeld* £4.50

The first of these three bosom and feline companions (our author is by no means averse to 'the aromatic nutty smell of cats' fur') is the milk-white and plumey-tailed Peter, to whom the pussy-besotted and, indeed, plumey-tailed Dr Rowse so lovingly introduced us a bare five years ago and in these very pages, so two thirds of this extremely thin volume are old hat. A swift reminder of various important details. Neutered Peter had been preceded by Janey ('a regular tomboy') whose indelicate practice it had been to join Dr Rowse 'when I sat down on the WC' and then recklessly seat herself on his lap. Peter, more stand-offish and a little inclined to be 'chesty', used to be held up to the telephone to purr messages to his master when at All Souls ('How he hated my going away to Oxford – one could see the grey look of misery in his eyes').

I had forgotten that pussy shared such an upper-crust ambience, with Cynthia Carew-Pole 'asking for him on the telephone'; postcards from Hardwick Hall and 'Evie', Duchess of Devonshire; chats with the wife of the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe ('Countess Lil', it seems, to close chums); and kind inquiries from nice Lady Aberconway (Christabel to almost everybody). In between playing pussy-cat football and making 'mousey noises' and having his chin tenderly nibbled, Dr Rowse slams away at almost anything that isn't a cat – dogs, his mother, the Press, unattached ladies wishful to attach themselves, reviewers (oo-er!), university students and human beings in general (classed with reptiles). This sourness would be easier to tolerate if Life had ever taken much of a swipe at our cat-fancier, but things haven't really been too totally dusty for him. To be a fellow of All Souls is a treat that doesn't come everybody's way (my invitation must have gone astray). He is an enormously successful author and a tireless lecturer, is widely and warmly welcomed in America and generally made much of, besides being regarded (possibly the most agreeable thing of all for him) as a 'card'. But on and on go the waspish and repetitive wails. Not for nothing has he a fellow-feeling with cats.

You'll want to know the range of Peter's vocabulary. Just the seven words – 'Beryl' (the housekeeper, and a rival in love), 'dinner' (even better when spoken of as din-din-dinner), 'mouse', 'milk' (the healthful fluid also figures as 'milkie-dinkie'), 'no' and 'out'. Did he know, you will be asking yourselves anxiously, the word 'cake'? Yes he did.

Then there were Chalky ('very dainty and spotless') and Tommer, a black farm-cat who was undomesticated and of somewhat raffish appearance but who fell like a ton of Kitekat for the good doctor and on occasion played a fairly unusual Romeo to the rather mature Juliet of his master:

> On warm summer nights, he would spend the whole night on the seat below my bedroom window; and when I called his name would look up with a look of touching devotion.

It only needs a balcony and a pyjamaed Dr Rowse intoning 'parting is such sweet sorrow' for the picture to be complete. On the other

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hand, students of Frog literature may prefer to see them as Cyrano and an elderly Roxane.

By this time, Phyllis had replaced Beryl and the little family had been joined by a young tortoise-shell cat called Tiger and a glossy black stray, Flip. The narrative is not without its moments of suspense:

> Only this morning Phyllis told me that Flip was trying to tell her something, came two or three times to attract her attention – until she found that Tiger had been shut in the outdoor lavatory.

Then Tommer goes missing ('Where could he be?') and is found to have idiotically (my adverb) fallen through a grating and ended up in the cellar ('Down we hurried'). But alas, attempts to let him stay 'in his nest in the lobby all night' were failures (accidents). Dr Rowse, an academic who does not seem greatly to care for undergraduates, must frequently and angrily have scrawled the equivalent of 'Do again' on poorly presented and repetitive and thinly assembled essays. But here enough is surely enough. *Don't* do again.

Christopher Hill

The Land of the Free

John Milton: Poet, Priest and Prophet by JOHN SPENCER HILL *Macmillan £10*

It is not so very long since Dr Leavis deplored literary students having to 'devote any large part of their time to solemn study of Milton's "thought" ' (his quotation marks). Fortunately students of English literature have felt otherwise, and some of the most valuable recent work on Milton has taken full cognizance of the ideas of England's most intellectual as well as most revolutionary poet. Thanks to Maurice Kelley and others, Milton's ideas are no longer seen as those of a traditional Puritan. His extremely heretical theology links him in many respects with those radical republicans of the English Revolution who wanted to abolish all compulsion in religious matters. Milton thought the achievements of the Revolution were 'the most heroic and exemplary . . . since the foundation of the world'. More heroic and exemplary, it would appear, than the life and death of Christ: Milton rejected the Trinity.

Milton sacrificed 20 years of his life – and his eyesight – trying to build a better society in England, only to see the slow degeneration of the republic and the total defeat of his hopes in 1660 with the restoration of Charles II. If we see Milton's last great poems, *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, as the product of his attempt to come to terms with the failure of the Revolution, his ideas do not seem so remote from the contemporary world. Such an approach, far less crudely put, has characterised the best recent work on Milton – that of Sir William Empson, D. F. Bouchard, Boyd Berry, Hiren Gohain, Armand Himy, Loretta Mannucci and Lady Radzinowicz.

J. S. Hill is a doctor of Toronto University, and he writes in the tradition of the great Toronto Miltonists, A. S. P. Woodhouse and A. E. Barker. He mentions none of the critics I have just listed, yet his work has much in common with theirs. Dr Hill regrets that 'many recent commentators insist on divorcing Milton's art from his biography', and one of the strengths of his book is his awareness of 'an extra poetic source of imaginative power in Milton's own attempt to redefine his role as God's servant after the collapse of the Puritan New Jerusalem'. Dr Hill starts from Milton's theology. Rejecting traditional Calvinist Puritanism, Milton evolved an Arminian theology which went considerably further than Arminius himself in its insistence on human freedom. Each man should serve God and humanity according to his talents. But God, as Milton put it, 'does not intend all people for one thing, but for each one his own work'.

Milton's own education was designed to fit him for a career in the church; but he was, in his own words, 'church-outed by the prelates'. Henceforth poetry was to be his medium of communication. Dr Hill insists that Milton came ultimately to see himself as a prophet with a *duty* to proclaim the truth which God's Secretary, Conscience, dictated to him. Thus, when he roused a storm of orthodox obloquy by defending divorce on grounds of incompatibility of temperament, his comment was 'God, it seems, intended to prove me, whether I durst alone take up a rightful cause against a world of disesteem, and found I durst'. Similarly in April 1660, a month before Charles II returned, Milton risked his life by publishing a virulent attack on monarchy in general and the Stuarts in particular – at a time when other republicans were prudently silent.

All this makes sense, though I am not myself convinced that Milton retained his intention of becoming a parson until 1640. Professor Berkeley suggested in his *Inwrought with Figures Dim* (The Hague, 1974) that in 'Lycidas' (1637) Milton by implication totally rejected the Church of England. It is a pity that Dr Hill does not mention this valuable book, and barely refers to the necessity of allowing for the censorship in assessing Milton's views before 1640. As soon as it collapsed, his earliest pamphlets make it clear that he had already separated himself from the Presbyterians with whom he was still in tactical alliance. My guess would be that Milton decided some time between 1633 and 1637 that the church was impossible for him. His trip to Italy in 1638-9 implies that the decision had been taken. I know of no man intending to enter the priesthood who undertook this tour, though it was already common enough among aspirants to a secular career.

Milton's heretical treatise, *De Doctrina Christiana*, Dr Hill rightly insists, is 'an indispensable guide' to understanding his later poems. It has recently been used effectively by Professor Low in relation to *Samson Agonistes*, and in Lady Radzinowicz's magnificent *Toward Samson Agonistes* to illuminate all the later poems. Dr Hill agrees with Lady Radzinowicz in rejecting W. R. Parker's suggestion of a date before 1660 for *Samson Agonistes* – an idea which enjoyed a brief vogue in the days when it was wrong to relate a poem to a real world from which it originated.

Dr Hill disposes too of Parker's view that there is a 'severe avoidance of theology' in *Samson Agonistes*, and concludes sensibly: 'I do not see how it is possible that the tragedy could have been composed before the doctrines on which it depends had been worked out in *De Doctrina Christiana*.' Milton, he thinks, 'poured a good deal of his own spiritual and intellectual biography' into Samson. Samson had to learn to wait for the right moment before smiting the Philistines. In *Paradise Regained* the disciples and Mary learned the same lesson. The Son of God rejected the kingdoms of the earth when Satan offered them; he did not repudiate the possibility of an earthly kingdom. Only after Samson had learnt to reject premature activity could he 'fulfil his predestined role as Israel's deliverer'. The defeated English revolutionaries, including Milton himself, had to learn the same lesson.

Dr Hill dates *Samson Agonistes* to 1660-1, when Milton was in the middle of writing *Paradise Lost*. It is a possible date, but the 'traumatic experience of the Restoration' would not have been forgotten even ten years later; and the conclusion of *Samson Agonistes* suggests a recovery of hope that would have been difficult for Milton to achieve in 1660-1. The choruses in *Samson Agonistes* rhyme, and in 1668 Milton had attacked 'the troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming'. Dr Hill argues that Milton could not have written the play after that date. But could he have *published* it in 1671, without explanation, if it

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ANDRE DEUTSCH

contradicted what he had written in 1668? The answer is to be found in the context. Milton was joining in a controversy about rhyme in 'heroic verse, in longer works especially', in heroic drama, satire and epic. The 'stanzas framed only for the music' of the closet drama *Samson Agonistes* were something quite different.

This book is a welcome contribution to the renaissance of historically-based Milton studies. The theological approach brings valuable insights, including a remarkable demonstration of the relevance to the Fall of Raphael's astronomy lecture. Occasionally Dr Hill's work has the defects of its qualities. He says, for instance, that 'the failure of the Puritan theocracy' forced Milton fundamentally to revise plans for his epic. But in the normal dictionary sense of the word there had been no theocracy in the 1640s and 1650s, nor would the anti-clerical Milton have welcomed one. He had indeed to revise his plans after 1660. Instead of glorifying the elect nation, as he had hoped in the early days of the Revolution, he had to explain why lay Englishmen had failed to rise to the opportunities offered by the overthrow of monarchy and episcopacy. And he had to combat despair: 'the man who believes will not be in too much of a hurry (Isaiah 28.16); he puts his mouth in the dust and says, "Perhaps there is hope" (Lamentations 3.29)'.

Philip Mason

Power Base

Hinduism: A Religion to Live By by NIRAD C. CHAUDHURI *Chatto* £7.50

A Hindu married woman is supposed to give her husband a devotion amounting to worship and ideally to burn herself on his pyre; in no case may she marry again after his death; as a widow, she must shave her head, sleep on the ground and in general live a life of hardship. A high standard of married chastity is maintained: yet in one of the most popular myths of Krishna the well-beloved, a vivid and detailed description of his passionate sexual intercourse with Radha (who is in some versions his own wife but more often someone else's) is followed by an account in scarcely less detail of how immediately afterwards he miraculously satisfied the sexual demands of no less than 900,000 wives of cowherds, who were so enamoured that they had left their husbands to follow him. Reading Nirad Chaudhuri's latest book has crystallised in my mind an impression, previously nebulous, that almost every manifestation of Hinduism embodies a dialectic between opposing principles.

No one who knows Chaudhuri's writings will expect this to be a tame eulogium of the religion in which he was brought up. He is an original, never happy unless he is destroying an idol of the market-place. But one of his main theses is orthodox enough – that the original Indo-Aryan system of religion split into four and developed on different lines in Greece, Italy, Persia and India. It does not take much scholarship to identify the Sanskritic *dyaus pitr* with Zeus Pater and Jupiter. And it is well known that in both the Indian and Greek systems a younger generation of gods grew up to oust the older. For the Greeks, Ouranos was succeeded by Cronos and Cronos by Zeus. A similar process of celestial *coups d'état* occurred in the Hindu pantheon. But while Zeus and the gods of Olympus are generally agreed to have picked up a good deal from the earth and fertility gods of the people whom the Aryan Greeks supplanted and enslaved, Chaudhuri will not allow that the gods of the Indian Aryans learned anything from the natives.

'There is not a single element in the culture of any civilised human group in south India which is not Aryan-Brahmanic,' he says fiercely. And he goes on to argue that at the time of the Aryan invasion of India, 'the non-Aryans were beyond the pale of Hindu society and therefore untouchable. The Aryan Hindus regarded them with fear, hatred, contempt, disgust . . .' – and therefore it is impossible even to imagine that the Hindus would borrow anything from them. But quite apart from the fact that disgust is often accompanied by fascination, there is good reason for believing that when the Aryans came into India – perhaps about 1500 BC – they found a well-established urban civilisation in the Indus valley with great cities at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. And there are grounds at least for believing that in this civilisation the bull was sacred and a god was worshipped who resembled the later Hindu god Siva. There is even an indication of an occupational caste-system. These are all features of later Hinduism which are not to be found in the literature of the invading Aryans, who are far more like the Greeks of the Homeric poems. Again, we find Chaudhuri arguing that the goddess Kali – usually represented as riding a tiger or lioness, wearing a necklace of human skulls, and carrying in one of her four arms a human head dripping blood into the mouth of a jackal – is 'never considered by her worshippers in any light except as a divine mother as omnipotent in power as she was without reserve in her love and mercy'. Well, perhaps.

That 'the intelligence of modern Hindus has been paralysed by a fanatical nationalism' is one of Chaudhuri's well-known themes; he is no less vigorous in his attack on 'Europeans who have become so de-vitalised that they feel the Western heritage of religion, ethics, and intellection as an unbearable burden', and to whom in consequence 'the so-called Hindu spirituality has become a mirage'. Here I am very much with him – except that I doubt whether many of those who respond to the advertisements on the walls of the London Underground by Hindu swamis have even heard of the great Catholic mystics. But surely when he rides against 'the so-called Hindu spirituality' Chaudhuri is attacking a much more powerful windmill than he admits. 'The basic aim of Hindu mystical life is to convert all inward experience into physical states perceptible to the senses . . .' he writes. And again: 'Hindu spirituality is a pursuit, not of beatitude, but of power.' The last is a subtler point than it sounds in isolation, since power includes 'freedom from the restraints imposed on man by Nature'. And it is a point well taken that Mahatma Gandhi felt compelled to 'bring into politics the power over men derived from renunciation and asceticism'. Nonetheless, most Hindus think that what

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they seek is *moksha*, of which the literal meaning is primarily release but which implies a positive counterpart – insofar as anything in Hinduism can be said to be positive. It means release by union with the infinite. It is very hard to think of this as meaning power.

Apollo has gone, Ganesh survives. While the gods of Greece and Rome fell before a religion of the book, the Hindu gods survived centuries of rule by another people of the book, Islam, and a shorter period by the British. Why? Because, says Chaudhuri, the system brought gains to the many, who seek protection and security, as well as to the few, who seek power and liberty. He has splendid passages about the gains to the many – comfort in sorrow, resignation to a harsh existence, joy in recurring feasts. But he says very little about the social system. To me it seems that one of the great achievements of Hinduism, and a principal reason for its survival, is that it gave its blessing to a social system which has survived two millennia of rapid political change, amounting often to chaos.

No one who reads this stimulating book can be left in any doubt about the diversity of Hinduism, nor about the changes that have taken place through the centuries in its various cults. Hinduism means a great deal to many people – but it is, as Chaudhuri says, more a religious outlook than a religion. Baffling, fascinating, built on paradox, it can never be defined, and in whatever terms it is described someone will disagree. Nirad Chaudhuri has attempted the impossible and has written a book that is lively, entertaining and instructive, and that no one but himself could have written. But let no beginner in the field suppose that he can be quoted without incurring contradiction from another authority just as learned.

Stephen Koss

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memorates, his epic work combines a prodigious learning with a zest for critical synopsis.

Divided into two volumes for purposes of convenience, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* must be taken as a whole. The first half surveys political philosophy, broadly defined, during the Renaissance, with tantalising references to the Reformation and beyond. Its successor, although it concentrates on the overlapping religious and secular struggles of the 16th century, recapitulates and develops the earlier themes which are assembled in prismatic sequence. Likewise his probing discussions of the scholastic and humanist traditions build towards the ultimate conclusion 'that the religious upheavals of the Reformation made a paradoxical yet vital contribution to the crystallising of the modern, secularised concept of the State'.

Heralded by a spate of scholarly articles, many addressed to 17th and 18th-century topics and all distinguished by a strong methodological bent, this book is a virtuoso performance that amply justifies Professor Skinner's reputation: long tipped in academic circles as 'the coming man', he has now unmistakably arrived. There are no fewer than three discrete levels on which his *magnum opus* may be read. Most obviously, it furnishes a fresh approach to the major (and numerous minor) classical texts, superseding Pierre Mesnard's standard account, which has been tarnished by time. In addition, the author entertains a 'wider ambition': venturing into territory which Mesnard and others left uncharted, he attempts to root the various theories and theorists in their respective intellectual, social and political contexts. Thus he projects successive 'conceptual shifts' against a background of events, seeing them – and the distinctive vocabularies in which they were couched – as responses to a rapidly changing environment. Ideas, far from being autonomous, were formulated under specific circumstances and deliberately used to 'legitimate' (one of the author's favourite words) and even to implement policy.

On a third level, not far below, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* ranks as a massive exercise in historiographical commentary. Here, inevitably, the non-specialist is obliged to take many of its judgments on faith. In the course of his intensive research, Professor Skinner obviously read and digested not only all the essential original sources, but also the vast secondary literature, which he subjects to equally rigorous scrutiny. This aspect of the enterprise, relatively the least successful, is accentuated by the device of identifying all sources parenthetically, within the body of the text, thereby avoiding 'an intolerable clutter of footnotes'. Instead there is a clutter in the form of interjections, most of them too terse and cryptic to make clear the objections that are being raised.

For although unstinting in his praise when he considers it due, the author seems unable to resist the temptation to instance, if not to explain, his quarrels and quibbles. Especially in the first volume, where he is at his most combative, there is scarcely a page on which one authority or another is not faulted for being 'misleading', 'wilfully misleading', or 'somewhat misleading'. Like a counter-reformation theologian, determined to extirpate 'all the heretics of this age', he rattles off indictments for 'over-statement', 'over-emphasis', and 'slight exaggeration'. One offender commits the unpardonable sin of having taken an 'almost perverse' view of John Colet. Worthy of the medieval scholastics themselves, these disputations will doubtless reverberate in the cloistered pages of the professional journals; but they will surely elude and possibly irritate the general reader.

That leads to the fundamental question: for whom have these volumes been written? According to the dustjacket, this 'work is intended to be both an introduction to the period for students and justification of a particular approach to the interpretation of historical texts'. While not mutually exclusive, these intentions frequently work at cross purposes. To the advanced student, who has already obtained an 'introduction' elsewhere, Professor Skinner offers an apparatus and, in all likelihood, a corrective; yet he can expect few to accompany him on his bibliographical digressions. His fellow-specialists, on the other hand, will not require a reference to Scarisbrick's biography to substantiate the assertion that, by 1527, Henry VIII 'was eager in any case to marry Anne Boleyn'.

Failing to provide her husband with a male heir, that lady 'rather cunningly' introduced him to the writings of William Tyndale, who implored 'a godly prince' to enact 'a full and godly reformation'. Leaving aside the question of its godliness, the Henrician reformation is generally considered to have been fuller in its political than in its religious dimensions. Professor Skinner, however, does not always draw this distinction. By his designation, itself more contentious than it may appear, Tyndale and his doctrines were Lutheran. So, among countless others, was Thomas Cromwell, whose 'legislative genius' is applauded with an Eltonian gusto that will not command universal favour. Lutheran, used in such a catholic sense, may be misleading, either wilfully or somewhat.

Because the author is keenly alert to the way that words change in meaning as they transfer back and forth from the spiritual to the secular spheres, or as they move across boundaries and centuries, one expects him to be absolutely scrupulous. His persistent use of

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This English

Maureen Colquhoun might think of suing the *Observer*. The other week their first leader, with the aid of a misplaced apposition, accused her of being a prototype Madam. Then a near-homophone (is 'envious' following 'credulous'?) and an example of the sort of fake elegance up with which Churchill would not put.

☐ Nobody, not even the Rev. Ian Paisley (who spoke against the bill when it was given its first reading last week), actually believes that prostitution is going to stop. And according to Ms Maureen Colquhoun, who introduced it, a lot of sociological experts think it would be a crying shame if it did. **Leader** *Observer* (I. Busby)

☐ Bob's envious lifestyle centres around two completely different worlds. *Coventry Evening Telegraph* (R. Clag)

☐ These are the questions which, not least in the United States, have caused the misgivings and to which the President may yet astonish everyone with his answers. **Leader** *Guardian* (J. Robertson)

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'populist' rankles as a modern label, affixed anachronistically. Apart from John of Leyden, who led the besieged Anabaptists at Münster in 1534 and who advocated the sharing of wives along with other property, who else deserves that appellation? Professor Skinner owes a definition to his readers, who may be sufficiently puzzled by his over-statement (slight exaggeration?) that the fatal illness of Giangaleazzo Visconti was 'a miracle [that] saved Florence'. Most political scientists would agree that populism can be more readily explained than miracles. Professor Skinner should be encouraged to try his hand at both. That, in the light of his extraordinary achievement, does not seem too much to ask.

Morris Fraser

Who Are They Now?

Reliving Past Lives by HELEN WAMBACH
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Helen Wambach's interest in reincarnation was awakened some 15 years ago by a succession of apparent trivia – a state of altered consciousness in a Quaker memorial, a sensation of hot sun, sober clothes and a ride on horseback, a medieval battle recalled under LSD, a spectral policeman and an old fairy tale. Treating phobic patients by the fairly conventional means of encouraging them to recall traumatic experiences in their past, she found that some of them could, apparently, describe events that took place long before their own lifetimes. A Californian student, under hypnosis, felt himself to be a dark-skinned Catalan shepherd boy, a young teacher was a peasant in tsarist Russia and another student recalled specific details of her 'former life' as a child in 19th-century Massachusetts, including her death by suicide. Ms Wambach painstakingly checked the details as far as possible, even finding an unmarked grave in the place pinpointed by her subject; she concludes that each of these experiences was nothing less than a kind of action replay of a former existence, and that the reality of reincarnation is the only possible way of explaining them.

For her main research project she assembled 12 people and took them through a total of some 1,000 'hypnotic regressions' to time periods ranging from 2000 BC to the early 20th century. All described a succession of past existences in which they were, apparently fairly randomly, male or female, dark-skinned or Caucasian, and all rewarded Ms Wambach with fluent accounts of Egyptian temples, priests and sacrifices, castles and quinquiremes, the Great Fire of London, plagues, miracles, births, deaths. Most remembered several death experiences vividly; these were similar to the near-death experiences collected by Dr Raymond Moody – a sensation of seeing one's body from above, then of speed, a long tunnel and a bright light, and then of numerous presences, mostly of people known and loved in 'real life'. Although they felt affection for the bodies they had inhabited,

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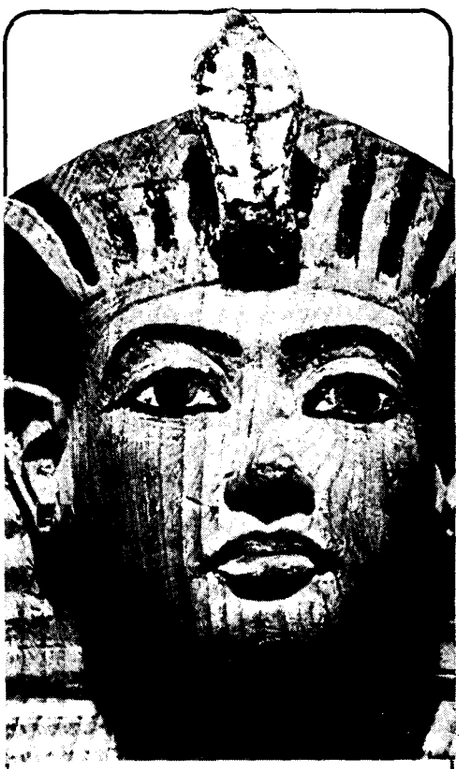

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the subjects said that they now felt an almost unbearable sense of happiness and release. Death by suicide appeared to be the exception; a girl who recalled having blown her brains out said that nothing changed. 'The pain was still there.' As the author took each subject through a specific period of the past, she asked him or her to visualise, in particular, the food, commerce, clothing and architecture around him; again, she checked from all available records and found most of the details accurate. She also indicates, using some uncomplicated graphs, that the sex, age and social class distribution of her regressed 'lives' accurately reflects their known distribution during each time period.

The book is an absorbing read and some of the evidence is very impressive indeed. Ms Wambach's main arguments for the existence of reincarnation are that the subjects were able to recall facts not accessible to them in full consciousness, that these represented authentic elements in past civilisations, and that there was no way in which the subjects could have learnt of many of these details in their present lives. The reasoning is skilful and seductive. Freud wrote that subconsciously each of us believes in his own immortality – and there is no reason why we should disbelieve Ms Wambach, or want to. Who are you now, Sigmund? But there is no reason why we should believe her either. For a number of reasons her work does not have full scientific credibility. To begin with, her evidence is completely unsupported, and no self-respecting scientist would expect to have a paper published, or dream of publishing it, if it did not include some account of work by other researchers whose work at least partly verified his own. But there is nothing of this, no bibliography, not even an index. The author is of course working in virgin territory, but only to a degree.

Further, her accounts of hypnotic regressions are coupled with 'evidence' from table-tipping, Ouija boards, astrology, drug-induced experiences, automatic writing and telepathy – and these are such well-recognised playgrounds for cheats and charlatans that one is most uneasy to see equal and uncritical acceptance given to information from all sources and also to see so much of it expressed in the language of toxic psychoses, in terms of 'trips' or 'flashes'. Again, if one lists the experimental subjects whom she describes in any detail it becomes clear that none is typical of the general population in terms of perceptual reliability. They appear almost without exception to have been isolates, dabblers in drugs, drop-outs, experimenters with fringe psychologies or religions, or preoccupied with self-hypnosis and mysticism. And some of their recollections are highly suspect. I can just believe that, if reincarnation were indeed a fact, subjects could recall past lives under hypnosis, but I cannot believe that these memories would be pegged to an exact chronology, or that subjects would be conveniently provided with 'flashes' or subtitles showing the precise date (usually a date 'BC' or one taken from the Gregorian calendar long before it was devised) or 'flashed' positions on a map that did not exist at the time. Yes, the map might exist now, but how could the subject have possibly referred that map to his recollection of being, say, a primitive goat boy on a mountain somewhere? These are difficulties that might just have some explanation, or might have none in the present state of our knowledge; the worry is that the author does not even appear to recognise them as difficulties.

At the same time, Ms Wambach writes with engaging diffidence and, in all fairness, she does not claim to have all the answers, or even to have any of them. But if she hopes for wide acceptance of her thesis, then she must re-test it outside the limits of a small, credulous and very parochial culture. I for one very much hope that she will; I should enjoy recalling, yet again, 19th-century Vienna, the Paris Saltpêtrière and that exasperating Dr Jung.

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BRITISH POLITICS TODAY A STUDENTS' GUIDE **Bill Jones** and **Dennis Kavanagh** (editors) With its analytical and interpretative approach, *British politics today* takes full account of the way the events of the 1970s are challenging our political thinking. Its note-style presentation directs the student's attention to the essential points as it sets out, concisely and authoritatively, the arguments and issues for study. *cloth £3.75 paper £1.60* published in collaboration with the Politics Association.

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Geoffrey Robertson

Men Apart

The Police in Society by BEN WHITAKER *Eyre Methuen* £9.95

Policing the Police edited by Peter Hain *John Calder* £6.95 and £2.95

Ben Whitaker trusts the police and Peter Hain doesn't, so these two books in blue keep each other in a sort of order. Whitaker's police are in polite society, discoursing with an eloquent honesty far removed from Scotland Yard's disingenuous double-talk when rejecting Hain's complaints. Yet each author is observing a different side of the same coin, whose value both seek to measure in terms of community support. Sections of that community are increasingly toying with alternative currencies; for the rich, there is a burgeoning private security industry; for minority groups, the option of apathy. Both authors want restored allegiance to a responsible force, and from Whitaker's give and Hain's take, a much improved balance emerges.

The most damaging trend has been for the police to see themselves as a race apart from the community on whose support they rely, and as a race above the law whose principles they are sworn to uphold. Lofty postures are struck by police spokesmen who paint the force as a beleaguered garrison under attack from powerful do-gooders, cunning lawyers and irresponsible media. Internal disciplinary rules encourage separation by penalising officers who buy their own homes (thereby moving *into* the community) and outlawing political involvements and trade union activity. Archaic recruitment procedures dictate a clone-like search for men who are white and high, without glasses or bad teeth. (Whitaker aptly observes that the most brilliant French detectives have been small, bespectacled and flat-footed.) Solidarity breeds contempt for the rights of others, be they criminals or complainants. The Courts encourage malpractice by gratefully receiving improperly obtained evidence: the 'Judges Rules' are rarely enforced by the judges, and policemen become fellow-conspirators every time they synchronise their notebooks. Officers who begin by covering for each other may end by covering up for each other; the untold scandal of recent corruption trials was not the numbers convicted, but the very large number of

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their fellows, at all levels, who *knew*. Over 70 per cent of policemen will not disclose their occupation when on holiday: their job has become a secret freemasonry, not to be shared with outsiders.

The more the force is insulated from the struggles of other workers, the more those struggles are perceived as anti-social and, ultimately, as criminal. The building-worker actually lives a more dangerous life than the policeman, who learns about a building-workers' picket from the charge-sheet for obstruction. The vagueness of public order law gives every police officer a discretion to turn a peaceful demonstration into a mass arrest: on such occasions, his role is political, and his reaction will depend on his politics. Permitting Police Federation affiliation to the TUC might provide a greater bond of comradeship during industrial disputes, when police decisions are rarely conducive to conciliation. The force's traditional suspicion of eccentricity, outspokenness and conscientious belief might be lessened if these qualities were encouraged within the force itself: at present, some chief constables run their patches like feudal barons, giving permission to marry, permission to live outside police quarters, and even permission to grow beards. Petty restrictions inhibit every aspect of a policeman's private life: in some areas membership of Labour clubs is forbidden, and every step is taken to thwart political consciousness. Nothing exemplifies the class role of the police so much as the low priority given to white-collar crime. The fraud squad is a tiny backwater without a professional accountant, passed over for promotions and heavily dependent upon newspaper detection. In other countries the advent of a Labour Government is a signal for redoubled efforts against corporate crime: in Britain, it has been business as usual.

The Police in Society is an indispensable source-book, taking the form of a relentless time-and-motion study of contemporary law enforcement. Only 3 per cent of constabulary duty is consumed by the crime beat, which must be interrupted to complete paperwork routines and to attend, often unnecessarily, at Court remands. Police responsibility for dog and taxi licensing and traffic control duties further separate the constable from the hard-core crime he is trained to investigate, while too many police reserves are concentrated on 'solving' victimless crimes. It is easy to boost a flagging arrest rate by picking up prostitutes or catching flashers red-handed, and few jobs could be cushier or less productive than seizing a few hundred girlie magazines from a local newsagent and then settling down to several weeks of reading, indexing, cataloguing and reporting them to the DPP for 'action'. At a time when the odds are 11-1 in favour of the villain, Whitaker is surely right to call for a thorough overhaul of administrative procedures and allocation of effort. Thief-catching and thief-convicting increasingly depend upon forensic science, yet minuscule amounts are set aside for research and development. Police effectiveness depends upon police efficiency, not (as police spokesmen would have us believe) on tinkering with rules of evidence: the present debate over police powers pales into insignificance beside the hidden cost of wasteful and archaic routines.

Whitaker intelligently rehearses the arguments for increasing some police powers, but

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here his facts fall surprisingly short. For example, 'There has been no evidence that the police have abused the temporary powers they were given [by the Prevention of Terrorism Act].' Time now to consult Hain, where Brian Rose-Smith, a solicitor with unrivalled experience of that Act, catalogues 50 pages of abuses. Not all of his evidence is convincing but the chapter spells out the formidable extent to which this allegedly temporary expedient removes basic rights and threatens to entrench its philosophy permanently upon police thinking. Whitaker unhesitatingly brands criminal trials as a 'game', and wants to alter the rules in favour of the prosecution. Turn to Hain's account of his own pre-trial treatment for a valuable reminder that the prosecution go on to the Court leading by two sets to love.

Nothing affects police in society so much as the repute of the mechanism for investigating complaints. Sir David McNee is determined to pursue his predecessor's vigilance against corruption, but rudeness, dishonesty and bloody-mindedness also sour relations with the law-abiding public unless met with a visible reprimand. On this score Derek Humphry presents a disconcerting analysis of the 1976 Police Act. The Prime Minister drew its teeth at the outset by appointing elderly establishmentarians to the Complaints Board, while official encouragement for the Police Federation to sue complainants for libel seems to have frightened many of them into retracting their complaints. A justified complaint may be lodged by an individual with no evidence other than his own word: he simply hopes that the investigation will turn up some corroboration. The fear of a libel action (for which legal aid is not available) is a potent disincentive, especially since this danger is stressed by the Home Office in its leaflet explaining the new system. The Police Act also changed the burden of proof in disciplinary hearings – formerly misconduct had to be proved 'on the balance of probabilities', but now a tribunal must be satisfied beyond reasonable doubt. If police conduct is to be above suspicion, then a reasonable suspicion should suffice for a non-criminal disciplinary measure; Sir Robert Mark, who resigned because of his misgivings about the Act, may have the last laugh on liberal reformers.

If Hain alerts us to the worst in policing, so Whitaker deservedly reminds us of the derisory value we place upon the best. The £20 maximum award for bravery has not increased in over 40 years. Believe it or not, anyone can rent-a-cop for a private party: £3.13 an hour for a constable, or £8.08 for a Deputy Assistant Commissioner (evening dress is £1.50 extra, while police dogs are a steal at 95p a day). We may not have reached the level of technological cynicism of American motorists who install a million 'Fuzzbusters' each year to provide early warning of police radar traps, but too many of our drunken drivers sober up before a doctor can be found who will agree to test them. Both books stress the need for greater involvement in the community, but it is difficult to imagine the police dismounting from their high horses without some sort of welcome from the crowd. Perhaps they would be more mindful of the civil liberties of others if they were granted a few themselves.

Valentine Cunningham

Brownout

Twilight of the Generals by H. H. KIRST *Collins* £5.50
Overload by ARTHUR HAILEY *Michael Joseph* £5.95
Story of the Eye by GEORGES BATAILLE *Marion Boyars* £5.95

Rarely can the chancy troika of an NS fiction batch have caught up a trio of novels so catchily illustrative of the going novel options: all of *librairie* life is here. From Kirst, a traditional novel, still – thank goodness, and no Forsterian Oh Dear about it – telling a story as well as doing other calmingly simplistic old things like holding a mirror up to life. From Hailey, an incredible hulk best-seller whose affinity is less with books than with ordnance, wanting to be weighed and measured, to consternate rather than to be read. And from Georges Bataille, the sort of classy erotic *nouvelle* that comes glossed by Roland Barthes, insisting on its resolute modernity, its pukka refusal to do anything but dunk itself in its own textuality.

Hans Hellmut Kirst is not quite on the top table with the most outstanding German truthtellers about the Nazi past – Grass, Böll, Nossack, Enzensberger – but he emerges nonetheless unlighted from any comparison with his magisterial colleagues. Fired by the indignations of hindsight, *Twilight of the Generals* feels its gingerly way into the 'sewage' of the Hitler period, in particular the murky fashion the Wehrmacht's C-in-C von Fritsch and the War Minister von Blomberg were disposed of on the manufactured charges of, respectively, being homosexual and having married a whore.

It's a case of rotten fictions – the ugly scenarios, paid liars and cooked files of the SS; of Göring and Hitler as ham actors in their own scripts; of grisly puppeteers and eager puppets (there's a blackly gripping scene where Fritsch is fingered by a gallery of Gestapo heavies, freaks and hired blabbermouths in Heydrich's 'mannequin parade'). It's a story, in fact, of assassination and character assassination by fabricated documentation. The evidence against Eva von Blomberg is conclusive because filed; the charges against Fritsch unignorable because 'a matter of record': thus Hitler and Göring, great believers in the word, exculpate their actions. No wonder this novel is dedicated 'to those who die by the word'. And against forged documents the only apt resort is true ones. Utterers of dying words can only be vanquished by honest speakers-out: like Kirst and his kind, and above all like the tenacious detective Huber whom this novel celebrates, who persisted in the files until he found the paper that got Fritsch off. The Hubers may lose their necks (the historical Huber was hanged by Kaltenbrunner alongside Canaris) but their humane decency is made impressively to seem the one necessary hindrance to the liars and devils.

Overload's bag is also letting you know: not, though, about the past but about the grim present and grimmer future of electricity-guzzling California and by analogy (as the crate-load of accompanying bumf confirms) of Britain and elsewhere. Downmarket Frederick Forsyth, *Overload* is high on how electrical things get done, on generators, geothermals, hydroelectrics, brownouts, blackouts and what happens when Big Lil, hugest of the power stations, 'trips off the line'. Hailey's newest info dole-out may be about electricity, but it's less than electrifying to meet data so frequently static, yawningly dispensed at endlessly dawdled-over press conferences, court-hearings, board-meetings and lectures. This is hardly the way to bring ohm a sense of the global energy crisis, let alone the urgency of all the minor ruckles en route to the big one: the engineers steamed to death, the little boy up the pylon, the bomb scare at the energy conference hotel. Evidently not the least of our systems under stress is the novel at the mercy of Arthur Hailey.

Dulled by the faith that research is writing, content with character typologies that *Boys' Own Paper* readers might have found stifling, *Overload* is formally juvenile and intellectually simple. A sob-story about the righteous fight of commercial power-men for their millions of consumers' right to air-conditioning against the snooping vote-catchers and the conservationists who resist flooding and polluting yet more countryside, it's a boring case

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– a tax-exile's case too – for old-fashioned Tory laissez-faire.

The nastiness of *Story of the Eye* (*Histoire d'O* owes not a little to *Histoire de L'Oeil*), its brutalised erotic play with eye-balls, bulls' testicles and eggs (broken or boiled), is softened by the anti-realistic completeness of its pornographer's vision. Formally no blackout – nor even brownout – its chain of sexual metaphors and metonyms from all those balls and eggy slimes, turns cleverly into metaphors of the closed circularity of its own sensualism. Surreality, in short, decreates reality; the artist becomes God's blaspheming rival, skewing the Creator's given text. Naturally, Bataille's Catholic priest is made to piss into his chalice and ejaculate on the host. For Surrealism, like the New Novel, is a product of Catholic countries. So is ring-master Barthes. The sceptical Protestant, however, is less instantly wowed by pseudo-theological Bataille and his pissers on the old real, the old novel. If such is the fancy new syntagma, this doubter feels, its resemblance to the mere fantasies of the old morality has yet to be disproved and discounted.

Christopher Reid

The Ambassador

Life in this narrow neck
of the galaxy reads like a rebus –
one damned, inscrutable
poser after another.
The planet-surface is cluttered
with objects: wherever my feet fall,
something gives like a gibus
or jumps away with a squeak.

Impossible to tell,
as it were, between living and dead.
An innocent-looking box
will suddenly burst one side
with garish laughter. From hiding
behind a babel of bricks,
a three-inch ladybird
creeps out on stridulant wheels.

Most of the populace
turn out to be ciphers, dummies,
mere animalcules of stuffing
and stitching. I talk to them
politely, but they, it would seem,
are determined to say nothing
(although, if you press their tummies,
some do make a querulous noise).

And so I follow a nervous,
diplomatic course;
keeping my counsel; listening;
attending rigid tea-parties
with mad-eyed, plastic beauties
and blotto frogs; whispering
and peering in through the front door
of the tiny, bourgeois palace . . .

If I lose my patience,
forgive me. Yesterday,
I kicked a troop of saluting
soldiers down the stairs;
but at heart I still adhere
to the maxim that, through a studious
reading of chaos, we may
arrive at the grammar of civilisation.

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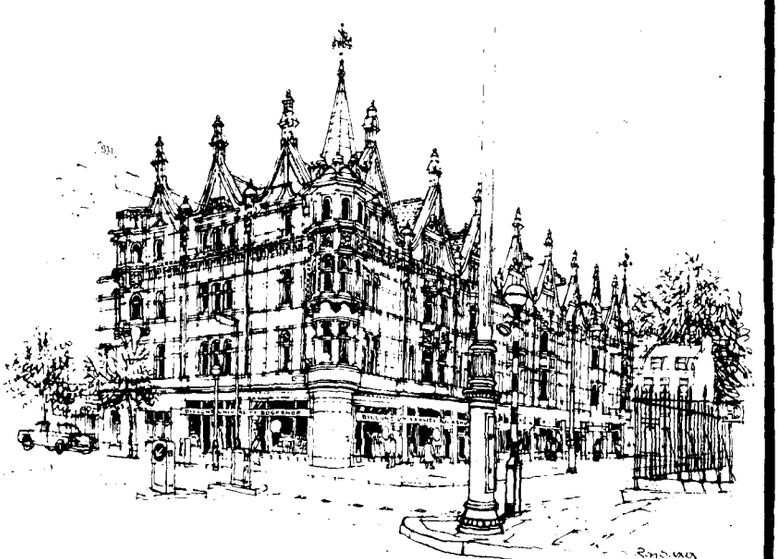

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THOMAS SZASZ The Myth of Psychotherapy *Oxford* £5.95; Schizophrenia: The Sacred Symbol of Psychiatry *Oxford* £6.95; The Theology of Medicine: The Political-Philosophical Foundation of Medical Ethics *Oxford* £4.95
JILL TWEEDIE In the Name of Love *Cape* £4.50
AUBERON WAUGH The Trial of Jeremy Thorpe *Michael Joseph* £6.50
HEATHCOTE WILLIAMS Severe Joy: Rantings, Ravings, Fictions, Phobias, Sermons, Causes, Manifestos and Graffiti *Calder* £8.50 and £3.50

Social Questions and Philosophy

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH The Nature of Mass Poverty *Harvard* £5.80
ERNEST GELLNER Spectacles and Predicaments: Essays in Social Theory *Cambridge* £14
GREGORY BATESON Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity *Wildwood* £6.95
ISAIAH BERLIN Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas, ed. Henry Hardy *Chatto* £8.95
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE Logic, ed J.R.de J. Jackson *Routledge* £11.50
NORBERT ELIAS The Dynamics of the State *Blackwell* £8.50
GEOFFREY ROBERTSON Obscenity *Weidenfeld* £16 and £8.50
GILBERT RYLE On Thinking *Blackwell* £6.95
J.P. STERN A Study of Nietzsche *Cambridge* £10
PETER TOWNSEND Poverty in the United Kingdom *Allen Lane* £15

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Coleman

Family Ways

Autumn Sonata (AA) *Classics, Haymarket and Poly; Odeons, Westbourne Grove and Swiss Cottage; Screen on the Green from 25 March*
California Suite (AA) *Odeon, Leicester Square*
Tarka the Otter (A) *Rialto*

There is a temptation to take Ingmar Bergman's second film made in exile as an expiatory feat. Hurling it on the couch, one might incautiously diagnose a bad attack of artist's guilt, of a private selfishness that can never compensate for the public, creative spin-offs. Bergman, whom I invariably come to with high and nervous expectations, lover-like, confessedly uses his personal hang-ups, obsessions, everyday ups-and-downs as the raw matter of his films: you would have to quote Fellini, the south pole to his north, to find another such, a supreme maker who consistently breaks the rules by being at once self-centred and mercifully gifted enough to strike on metaphors of vivid appeal that redeem the tormented preoccupation with ego.

This was not the way I expected to enter a review of *Autumn Sonata* when I first caught it at last year's London Film Festival. Then I was fairly bowled over by two tremendous performances: Liv Ullmann in owlish specs and braided hair as a priest's wife in contemporary Norway, Ingrid Bergman as her cosmopolitan, concert-pianist mother. It was, and is, a chamber piece, a duel for two tongues mercilessly hacking at each other. Charlotte, the mama, has just lost her companion and lover of many years: daughter Eva invites her to stay as long as she likes. The visit proves short-lived, explosively charged, inconclusive. There is a manifest unfairness, or imbalance, in the way the material for reproaches is set up. Eva's son drowned before his fourth birthday: she houses and nurses her spastic sister, Helena (Lena Nyman, painful as a mouthing vegetable), rescued from the nursing home Charlotte had sent her to.

It is sombre, heavy going: over-loaded dicing with family failures. But, to turn the phrase, on the face of it, a very great deal works. Ingmar Bergman brings Sven Nykvist's camera in perilously close on faces, and the gamble comes off again. One is used to Liv Ullmann (outside Hollywood) being nothing less than superlative, here a rancorous, gentle, raging and smoothing ugly duckling with a muddled parcel of accusations to unpack, looking beautiful and confident as she delivers her worst thrusts at delinquent, careerist Charlotte. The triumph, therefore, turns up in the vibrant, glowing, speaking-while-mute face of Ingrid Bergman, she who gets verbally slapped: watching Eva finger a Chopin prelude in her honour, for her favour, she registers more emotions, an everyday tangle of feelings, than in all her Hollywood films laid end to end. It is, incidentally, heartbreaking to witness; the sense of waste appals: what films she might have made.

Which brings us back to the other Bergman, he who can secure such performances from actors. No use pretending that *Autumn Sonata* is not a flawed occasion. 'You had taken charge of all the words in our house,' says tipsy Eva during an insomniac night. And, again, 'I was 14 and you directed all of your pent-up energy against me.' The condemnations accumulate, bearing down on the basic truth that Charlotte, the 'artist', refused to accept Eva for what she was, had to make her over, straighten her teeth, give her books she couldn't understand, 'not a shred of the real me could be loved or accepted'. Is the creator (the script is uncredited but Bergman wrote it) taking himself to task under this intermittently marvellous guise of a mother-daughter encounter, family disunion? It would help to account for the weighting of this compelling duologue, the fact that the pastor-husband is little more than a cypher, that Helena (or Lena, as Eva – more intimately – calls her) seems simply imported as a gratuitous, even masochistic element (Eva accuses her mother of aggravating her sickness), the residual impression of injustices committed.

Bergman, the director, is after all and above all a lonely family man. His public family is his famous repertory of actors, to whom he must seem to himself at his four o'clock in the morning or 'hour of the wolf' a puppet-master, a vainglorious manipulator. This is not the way I care to approach a film, or indeed any work of art, which should be judged within its own immediate frame. And *Autumn Sonata* can be praised for some formidable artist's risks (the opening and closing scenes, with Eva at work on inviting and apologetic letters to Charlotte, tranquilly set in a Dutch interior long shot, with her husband's voice over) and a few sharp and saving moments of humour. Perhaps one should take the affair at face-value, after all, and let the qualms go hang. There is always a throb of life in this awkward master's films, even his most self-serving, that summons a response.

Would as much could be said for the works of Neil Simon. One of life's mysteries (reinforced the other night by the man in question coming on strong on TV) is why this febrile, gadfly maestro of the one-line laugh-jerker should believe there is a serious undertow to his fantasies. Actually, it is not such a mystery. Surrounded as he is by showbiz folk and frequently drawing on their cushioned aberrancies, Mr Simon has long been lulled by *their* applause, their delighted acceptance of a grease-paint world as something real and meaningful. If one leaves the larger lumber of seriousness at home, there is no reason why one shouldn't lean back and snicker.

California Suite, a loose assembly of four sketches engaging assorted couples staying at the Beverley Hills Hotel in Los Angeles and re-stitched together by Herbert Ross from Simon's Broadway hit, has David Hockney reproductions alongside the credits as if to demonstrate we are in for a pretty cool and expensive degree of chic, and opens with great promise as folk plane in to LA. Remonstrated with for ignoring the No Smoking sign, a passenger – having had an eyeful of smog – ripostes: 'Oh, sorry, I thought it was for the people down there.' This could be Michael Caine, who is counter-cast as the bisexual antique-dealer husband of Maggie Smith, a bibulous actress arriving for a possible Oscar. They have some lovely bits, enhanced by Miss Smith's fluting, nasal nerviness: she is greatly concerned about a non-existent hump suddenly observed on her back, thrown into relief by her going-to-awards frock – 'It cost £500 and I look like Richard the Third,' she finely whines. Alas when she loses. 'Look at me tonight,' she has to ask relaxed Caine, about to pleasure her. 'Let it be *me* tonight.' Lordy. Jane Fonda and Alan Alda figure chippily in the other high-brittle encounter, a New York *Newsweek* wife and a divorced hubby chewing over who will keep their teenage daughter. She can't get over how insanely *young* he looks, and says so, marvellously. As bitch-kitsch, this is lovely, with Fonda snarling her little barbs, exquisitely timing. The Walter Matthau-Elaine May episode is disappointing slapstick, unredeemed by one crack, hers: 'Please. Not in front of the hooker'; and the all-black foursome, wasting Richard Pryor and Bill Cosby, is fearsome. For all some have said, Noël Coward's laurels are safe.

Produced and directed by David Cobham, *Tarka the Otter* is extremely brave and occasionally engrossing. The Henry Williamson original, however, with its congested, devoted, otter-level prose was always a risky venture and there are longish stretches of tedium. The wildlife photography is praiseworthy; I wish even more attempts had been made to ground the occasion to Tarka's eye-line; the humans are so amateurish they lend life to the animals and insects by contrast; someone should have curbed David Fanshawe's Disneyish score.

Television

Julian Barnes

Wally Nilly

Alan Weeks came up with a new bit of technicalese during the *World Figure Skating Championships* (BBC-1). A doughty commentator with a chauvinism which (unlike, say, Coleman's) doesn't make you feel ashamed of your own, Weeks has gradually instructed himself in the lexicons of the also-ran sports; and our ears have become attuned to the sound (if not the idea) of double axels, triple lutzes, salchows and so on. Last week, though, he suddenly sprang a new one on us – a 'triple-toe Wally'. To the uninitiated eye, it looked remarkably like a double axel or a triple lutz, consisting of a sequined leap, a confident twirl, an apprehensive descent and a lurchy landing, followed by a teutonic roar from the crowd and a quiet splatter of bouquets on to the ice. But this one was a

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triple-toe Wally. Named, perhaps, after my distant cousin Wally Barnes, the baldish but twinkle-toed Arsenal wing-half? Or Wallenstein, who tortured prisoners by cutting off two of their five toes? Or Wally Scott, author of three-decker novels? Maybe a triple-toe Wally is one of those barnacled snappers so fearlessly cuddled by David Attenborough? And how can we possibly find out?

Dr Bickleigh, the murderously turning worm of Francis Iles's *Malice Aforethought*, is a bit of a triple-toe Wally. In the new BBC-2 serial Hywel Bennett plays him to perfection: fussily adjusting his gold-rimmed spectacles, ball-brokenly trudging along behind the tennis-court liner, waitering a tray with a timid, tight-bummed walk. His black-gloved, high-coloured, semi-successful philanderer, lunging in the greenhouse with a mixture of confidence and funk, brings out the latent country doctor in all of us. Also brought out is the Beeb's entire fleet of Austin Sevens and Bullnose Morrises, mothballed after *Pennies from Heaven*, which are called upon once again to weave picturesquely through fields of tall grasses in the endless sunshine of the prewar years. Cheryl Campbell, the schoolmistress-sleepwalker in *Pennies*, must have gone to sleep in the boot of one of them: she turns up here as the rich local Other Woman. Three leisurely weeks to go to the Final Twist.

The Bring Back Bakewell campaign had another brief success in the course of this week's *Arena*, which included an old black-and-white clip of her staying cool in the garish and upstaging face of Dame Edna Everage. Despite repeated half-hearted attempts, I've always found Barry Humphries's act entirely resistible and the claims made for him as a sort of comic surrealist way over the top; but you can't deny either his hold over audiences – 'Stand up and tremble your gladdies' – or the obsessive self-concentration which produces it. His act reflects not so much hardened professionalism as a deeply manic condition: the relentlessness, plus a refusal to tip the audience the usual wink about the real character beneath the drag (indeed, Edna's constant slighting references to the absent Humphries make him appear the invented figure, her the real one), instil in us a deeper unease than most *travestis* do; and this enforces complicity in the act. Despite occasional flashes ('Look – a half-timbered car!' – of a Morris Traveller in Stratford-on-Avon), Humphries's text is thinnish, heavily reliant on hick Christian names and standard camp ruderies. But his props are lavish: stuffed corgies on the sofa, the giant box of Nivea Creme Assortment, the trayfuls of coloured specs. And how does he get those extraordinary spinster's legs? Probably by a sheer resolute belief in their existence.

On the *Player of the Year Awards* (LWT) the assembled Wallies and cloggers of the PFA chose Liam Brady as their season's superstar. This column's nomination, Jimmy Greaves, was a bit late getting in: it wasn't until the previous evening that I'd seen the incomparable goal-sniffer – his thinning top-locks now satirically permed in parody of Everton's front three – talking to Russell Harty with disarming openness about his alcoholism. As with many a 'reformed' alkie, there was more than a vestige of pride left about the heroic drinking achievements of yesteryear: 'I was very fortunate at Tottenham that we were all good drinkers . . . We were a team of drinkers . . . There was a lot of good drinkers at West Ham too.' But Greaves behaved with impeccable amiability despite some indelicate questioning from the Lip. 'What was the moment of deepest degradation for you?' is an updated, but considerably more mawkish version of Wilfred Pickles's famous, 'What was your most embarrassing moment?' Still, later in his show Harty made amends by extracting a hilariously significant pause from his other guest, Arthur Hailey. After a quarter of an hour or so of a relaxed, pleased, and indecently tanned Hailey, who looked the sort of man whose sunlamp is driven by native foot-power, the Lip suddenly shot at him, 'Are you a great writer?' Tick, tock, tick, tock, tick, tock; and then finally, with a straining modesty which must have put years on him, 'I think I'm a fine storyteller.'

Art

John Spurling

Hiking Back

Hamish Fulton: Selected Walks *Whitechapel*
Richard Long: The River Avon *Anthony d'Offay, 9 Dering Street, W1*
John Hubbard *Fischer Fine Art, 30 King Street, SW1*

One of the reasons why the main burden of David Hockney's attack on the Tate was misconceived is that the British have never made much showing as figure-painters. Landscape has been our thing, ever since the emergence of a British School of painters coincided with the emergence of landscape as a subject in its own right. Abstraction – at least in the hands of British artists – is simply a fresh approach to this traditional preoccupation, and if it appears at first sight to be more concerned with the act of painting than the subject, then so did the paintings of Turner and Constable to their contemporaries.

The latest approach to landscape is 'Land Art', whose two chief British practitioners are Hamish Fulton and Richard Long. Landscape for them is both ordinary and mysterious, under your boots and overwhelming, measurable and immeasurable. What can you do about such a tangible, intangible thing? Firstly, you can walk through it, shifting part of the burden of comprehension from your eyes to the rest of your body. Long and Fulton walk (not together: they are quite separate artists, though they were at the same art school) for days at a time across tracts of country in various parts of the world. Secondly, you can bring back mementoes of your walk in the form of photographs or found objects. Long brings back both, Fulton only photographs. Thirdly, you can leave mementoes of your presence in the landscape. Fulton doesn't do this, but Long makes a pile of stones in a corner of a field, and puts a rainbow of powder-paint round a mud-bank or in some other ecologically harmless way signifies that Kilroy was here. Fourthly, you can display your trophies, and share your experience with others.

Fulton's art-object is simply his photograph, usually one per journey, inscribed underneath, or sometimes over the surface of the photograph itself, with a title and a bald statement of the facts. For example: 'A two day 59 mile walk. Coast to coast across the northern peninsula of Newfoundland. Canada. Summer 1976.' This particular photograph – a large one in a large frame, though they come in a variety of sizes and shapes – shows an undulating road travelling straight from one's feet to the horizon under a ceiling of cotton-wool clouds. The suggestion is double-sided: that you, the viewer, making your instantaneous and automatic adjustment from the coloured, three-dimensional world of the gallery to the miniature black-and-white flatness of the photograph, are there on the road; and that, on the contrary, you are about as far from being there physically – blistered, striding, whistling and looking all round you – as it's possible to be. The titles often add an extra twist. A grand panorama of empty pasture in Kent with a long dark skyline is called *Barking Dogs*. A set of six almost identical turf-stretches with bare skies recording 'a 14 day walking journey round the Baldwin Peninsula' are entitled successively *The Bering Sea, Reindeer, Geese, Raven, Seal, Duck*. The effect is one of romantic melancholy. These are less advertisements for landscape, or colour-supplement celebrations of it, than valedictions.

Richard Long's evocation of the River Avon at Anthony d'Offay's also contains some romantically beautiful photographs, especially one showing the little stone bridge and meadow where the Avon is crossed by the Fosse Way. The Pre-Raphaelites would have done it in colour and added one of King Arthur's knights. Long, however, accompanies it with a large framed sheet of paper on which he has drawn the diagram of a meandering blue line crossed at one point by a straight black one. The whole is entitled: 'A walk of the same length as the River Avon. An 84 mile northward walk along the Fosse Way Roman Road. 1977.' Downstairs he has laid out two lines of driftwood collected from the river in 1977 and 1978. He is also selling copies of the small 'River Avon Book' which consists of white pages, without text, patterned all over in a light brown, dusty wash. No, it's not an illusion. They've been dipped in real river mud.

The difference between Fulton and Long is not one of purpose. They are both concerned to convert time into space and vice versa; to perform, as it were, a landscape for themselves and to lend the viewer conceptual ten-league boots so that he can perform it in his own imagination; to distil the essence of the original experience as powerfully as possible. But where Fulton's work is spare and ascetic, with only occasional lapses into the facile or precious, Long's is fussy and portentous. The ideas creak. Instead of launching the viewer into the landscape they are liable to trap him in their own machinery. The diagrams, the book, the lines of driftwood have no resonance beyond the self-consciousness of the artist. They speak of a Land-Artist looking for an exhibition, not of a man looking for a river.

I have already written in praise of John Hubbard's abstract landscapes in the catalogue introduction for his current show. Enough to say that Hubbard's paintings are in no sense mementoes of landscape, but rather present explorations of his feelings about it.

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The real landscapes that Fulton and Long have walked through can be alluded to and symbolised, but the imaginary ones that Hubbard makes are on the walls, fresh and accessible in every detail. He demonstrates that the fifth thing you can still do about landscape is to paint it.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Men in White Coats

The Fruits of Enlightenment *Olivier*
Subjects for Interrogation *Bush*
Normal Service *Hampstead*

Predictably, Tolstoy felt guilty about squandering his energies on *The Fruits of Enlightenment* and, equally predictably, he had no need to feel anything of the sort. It is as polemical a frolic, as monitory a joke as even his severe imagination could concoct. Rarely can the old tale of the clever servant who outwits his (or in this case, her) master have reflected so scathingly upon a whole class, order and way of life. The play was first performed in 1889, a decade and a half before Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard* and Gorki's *Enemies*; but it is no less helpful and suggestive a piece of literary evidence for anyone seeking to explain why revolution was inevitable.

'All vanity', the remark Tolstoy reportedly made of the play itself, is precisely the accusation it unremittingly directs at the upper-crust wastrels who drift in and out of the Moscow mansion in which it is set. All is vanity, all frivolity and triviality, from the master's obsession with spiritualism to the mistress's hypochondria, from the son-of-the-house's interest in Borzoi dogs to the daughter's extravagance at the dressmakers. These are people with too much money and free time, too little sense of responsibility and purpose. When a test of their collective humanity turns up, in the form of peasants clamouring for the opportunity to buy part of the family's country estate, each of them painstakingly proceeds to fail it. The men are told they are dirty, smelly, infectious. They are given gratuitous little lectures on agriculture by the son, who covets their money as a means of paying his debts, and laughed at as 'idiots' by the daughter. They are sent packing by the mistress, whom their very presence has reduced to a frenzy for fumigation. Finally, their life-or-death petition is rejected for no good reason by the master, or 'father', as they ironically call him.

The failure of their mission is received with unsurprised cynicism in the kitchen. To the alcoholic ex-cook, fired after 30 years' service and now sometimes sneaked back into the warmth by his successor, his one-time employers are simply 'damned swine'. Less savage voices speak of the family's endless meals and lurid junketings in the scientific spirit of the anthropologist, reporting on a visit to what Tolstoy sees, and invites us to see, as a droll jungle village mainly inhabited by moral cannibals. And the chambermaid, who plans to marry the son of one of the peasants, does something constructive. She wangles her way into the master's séance and manipulates the proceedings so that a contract materialises by magic upon his desk. Bug-eyed and blinking, he promptly signs it, giving the peasants the land they need for survival.

Ralph Richardson, one of whose specialities is a half-dazed, half-flustered benevolence, is effortlessly hilarious at this point; but the scene as a whole hasn't the comic impact a reading of Michael Frayn's expert translation had led me to predict. Perhaps the play's soapbox slant tends to freeze laughter. Or perhaps the trouble is Christopher Morahan's production, which sometimes seems lacking in subtlety and guile. There are several nice performances, notably from Anthony Douse, John Harding, Peter Needham as a hectic, breathless butler, and Sara Kestelman as a lady spiritualist with a monocled eye and a mouth in need of manacling; but one or two of the others teeter too far into caricature. Joyce Redman's mistress is particularly exorbitant, whether she's being haughty, panicky, or both at once. A tickling-stick that's too forcefully used is liable to bruise rather than amuse; and so it proves here.

All the same, the production cannot be safely avoided by those with any interest in Tolstoy, recent world history, or the sociology of hierarchies, by which portentous phrase I suppose I mean the nob class's airy exploitation of wage-slaves cannier and more resourceful than it cares to assume. Here's the intricate bustle of a great house only a few years from the deluge. Here are those fin-de-siècle fads, table-tapping and hypnotism, both pointedly contrasted with the peasants' unaffected Christianity. And here's a scepticism about the claims of science and medicine, combined with glee in twitting the soi-disant professionals for an unprofessional credulity, as marked as that later expressed by our own *Doctor's Dilemma*. Of course, Tolstoy was wrong to regard bacteriology as mumbo-jumbo, just as Shaw was wrong to mistrust vaccination. But the response of his erudite investigators to indisputable evidence that the chambermaid has rigged their séance is wickedly apt. They simply won't believe what doesn't confirm their preconceptions. In fact, they convince themselves that the revelation actually reinforces their case. As the professor-in-chief solemnly puts it, 'it is highly probable that the girl's activities touched off – as one might say, *elicited* – the manifestation of psychic energy, and gave it its particular form'. Even today, perhaps especially today, the same voice may be heard echoing up and down the stark-white corridors.

Those selfsame corridors are the subject of *Interrogation*, one half of which concerns sensory deprivation, the other that notorious experiment in which average men were tricked into punishing a twitching, protesting but actually disconnected 'learner' with ever-higher doses of electricity. Frederick Harrison, an author new to me, writes good, sharp dialogue, is careful to be as fair as possible even to a Cambridge-educated torturer, and proves refreshingly resistant to the pat moral, the obvious attitude openly struck. His first play, which confronts an expert on 'white noise' with a bomber responsible for 157 deaths, warily implies that interrogation-in-depth will only succeed in making terrorists feel more and more justified in wreaking direr and direr atrocities; and the second confirmed my suspicion, not that Mengele or Eichmann is actually lurking beneath the braces of the man next door, but that unscrupulous scientists can browbeat, mystify and con perfectly decent people into committing acts they would find impossible in less artificial circumstances. The conclusion, however tentatively put, is surely clear enough: beware of men in white coats.

John Byrne's *Slab Boys*, one of the Edinburgh Festival's better recent exports, showed Glaswegian tradesmen mixing colours for an industrial firm. His *Normal Service* takes us across town, up two or three social notches, and into the graphics department of what it would, I fear, be libellous to call Scottish Television. The working life of the department is described with the precision of a documentary, but also at times with a documentary's imperviousness to theatrical shape and structure, so that I, for one, spent much of the first act fiddling with my mental compass in a desperate effort to get basic bearings. But the reward for perseverance came in the second, whose sights and sounds include backbiting, back-stabbing, the climax of a bizarre quarrel about an exploding haggis, and a fight between a raging shop steward and the office novice, whose wife is in the process of having their first child somewhere offstage. It is funny, sometimes very funny, and comes up with its own gentle conclusion for aspiring artists. Beware of big buildings, especially ones that use the masts on their roofs to discharge the pollution inside.

Music

Andrew Clements

Magic Circle

Eisler *Smith Square; ICA Theatre*
Zemlinsky: String Quartet No 2 *DG* £4.75

Though he was eventually to become a committed 'composer of the people', Hanns Eisler started out as an exemplary modernist. Born in Leipzig in 1898, he studied with Schoenberg in the early 1920s and very quickly assimilated the techniques of serialism – Schoenberg came to regard him as his most talented pupil after Berg and Webern. But in 1924, just when a glittering avant-garde career seemed assured, Eisler broke with the Viennese circle and moved to Berlin, pronouncing himself dissatisfied with 'bourgeois concert music'. He took a teaching job at the newly formed Marxist Workers' School and when Kurt Weill's collaboration with Brecht broke up in 1929, Eisler seemed the natural replacement. He followed Brecht into exile in 1933, travelling round Western Europe before eventually settling in the USA. In 1947 the Committee for Un-American Activities started to hound him and he returned to East Berlin where he died in 1962.

Yet the course of Eisler's career was not quite so straightforward as that brief outline suggests. The abrupt politicisation of the Ber-

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lin years did not carry with it a total rejection of modernist, 'art-music' techniques: conversely even the early serial works are always undercut by a questioning, satirical social conscience. Eisler is perhaps unique among 20th-century composers in that within him the populist and the high artist seem to have coexisted quite happily, producing their most powerful utterances when the two were constructively combined.

The happy coincidence of two Eisler concerts within the same week contrived to give a remarkably well-rounded impression of his output, hardly any of which is known in Britain. At Smith Square the emphasis was on the propagandist and utilitarian composer, while the ICA concert included some of the earlier serial works. The common denominator was the East German soprano Roswitha Trexler, a marvellous advocate of Eisler's music. In both concerts she included a selection of his finest Brecht settings. But if in the ICA concert he appeared to be the stronger, more individual composer, it was because his best music seems to have been that in which the purely musical values of technique and craftsmanship were more important than simple, direct appeal. When the political content of the work could be assured, it seems, by the selection of an appropriate text, Eisler could then concentrate his mind on the music. For all their appropriateness as political weapons there is a hint of self-consciousness about Eisler's marching songs, the 'Song of Solidarity' and the 'United-Front Song', and too many reminiscences of Kurt Weill in the suites of music taken from long-forgotten films of the Thirties. Eisler's tunes always lacked the basic memorability of Weill's, for all their subtlety.

The turning-point in Eisler's career seems to have been the set of *Zeitungsausschitte*, brief settings of newspaper cuttings which he wrote just after he left Vienna. They brought him fame and notoriety, and in the deliberate banality of their texts marked a positive rejection of the serious religious or philosophical texts usually set by the Viennese School. In the earlier works, such as *Palmström* – a mini-*Pierrot Lunaire* on Poems by Morgenstern and Eisler's first serial work – and the set of Piano Pieces Op.8, there is evidence of a prodigious talent, handling serial and free atonal techniques with astonishing confidence though the huge debt to Schoenberg is always obvious right down to the ungrateful piano writing. This ability to manage any available technique is one of the main strengths of the music he wrote during his collaborations with Brecht. On the evidence of the selection we heard, it deserves an established place in the repertoire of any group specialising in 20th-century music. The two settings of Brecht's Sonnets after Goethe and Schiller were perhaps the pick of the bunch – disarmingly straightforward tonal vocal lines, clearly intended to present the text as immediately as possible, but bizarrely irrational accompaniments, full of harmonic non-sequiturs yet uncannily conjuring up an uneasy, sardonic atmosphere. Elsewhere there is ample illustration of how well Eisler understood the mechanics of serialism: how to mix atonality, 12-note rows and tonal harmony into a homogeneous idiom. He is perhaps a more significant figure in modern music than his categorisation as a 'political composer' has made him appear.

If Eisler left the Second Viennese School of his own volition for mainly ideological reasons, then the School left Alexander von Zemlinsky behind for purely musical ones. Zemlinsky was Schoenberg's brother-in-law, and the only formal teacher the great composer ever had. Yet his own music seems to have stopped developing around 1910, preserved like a fly in amber in that world of free chromaticism and passing tonal reference that Schoenberg explored in his First String Quartet and Chamber Symphony. Until the La-Salle Quartet's marvellous new recording of his Second String Quartet, none of Zemlinsky's music has been generally available on record in this country, though there is an imported disc of his *Lyric Symphony* to be found in some record shops. Written around 1913, the Quartet is a large-scale, tightly constructed work, never quite revealing an individuality in the music. There are echoes of Mahler in the Scherzo and Trio, of Schoenberg and Berg in the outer movements. It leaves an impression of great rhythmic vitality (which Schoenberg was quick to praise) and thematic greyness, but remains a fascinating sidelight on the inner circle of Viennese musical life in the first years of the century.

Sport

Russell Davies

The Fat Red Line

Reading Monday's papers was undoubtedly the best sport of the week:

☐ As leeks boiled around me in the thunder that was Cardiff's National Stadium, I stood a man ashamed, *writes Ken Poultice*. Ashamed to be English. Ashamed to wear the English rose. Because make no mistake: it should have been a lily. *A pink one*.

We English frankly lost our bottle. It was a fiasco. Only four points down with a quarter of the match to go, we threw in the sponge with a vengeance. Even the departure of sideburned super-star genius J. P. R. Williams with a 12-inch gash in his calf to the dressing-room, reducing Wales to only 14 fat men, could not rouse England from their turpitude.

It was thirty-stone, 43-year-old Mike Roberts, the forward all England expected to go puffing through the match on tired legs like Stephenson's Rocket, who started the rot, crashing bodily through the line-out – a beached whale was not in it – to land a killer try. Then Paul Ringer, a name that tolled the knell of English hopes, ran on like the clappers for another towering, cast-iron try.

The singing of the Welsh crowd swelled to burst-lung proportions as svelte sprinter J. J. Williams, moving with all the silky smoothness of a fried egg across a ballroom floor, powered in like a mountain goat to bring England to its collective knees. Heads began to hang among the England shirts as Wales once more tightened the noose. Streaking schoolmaster supersub Clive Griffiths gathered the greasy ball to his chest like a baby and set off for the wilting English line. Griffiths, a teacher, could not have galloped faster if he'd had Lester Piggott on his back, and his kick-ahead found sorry England once more counting Welsh sheep as little Elgan Rees burst through.

Rees, not a big man – he is little short of short – easily outstripped vaunted England speedster Mike Slemen to touch down yet again for a killer try. When Steve Fenwick, who had earlier missed more penalties than a cross-eyed traffic warden, slotted home the conversion, it was adding insult to injury-time.

As I warned at the start of the season, the Welsh are never dead until the last drop of red dye has been squeezed from their jerseys. Now they are riding high again on a tide of passion that bids fair to sweep all before it, while England stand Canute-like on the shore, dipping their toes in the shell-strewn shallows of commitment. To them I say: this is madness. Something must be done – surfboard, wellies, anything – before the edifice of English rugger is once more defaced by the rampant corgi of Wales.

☐ Do you know what it is like to be beaten to death with daffodils? Well I do, *writes Jeff Plasters*. I was there, in Cardiff's searing casserole of a National Stadium, when the rampant wild men of the valleys ran roughshod over the best rugby brains England could provide. My ears were pierced and my heart transfixed by the hoarse passion unleashed in terrace and field alike. It was like the Last Judgment all over again.

But man cannot live by Bread of Heaven alone. He needs skill, strength, heart, belief, spirit and, most important of all, something else. That something else was something I sensed in the dense, pensive Taffside air from the moment the first turnstile clicked: it was *hlywyll*. Yes, *hyllwl*, that mysterious element which never fails to percolate every Welsh heart on this day of days. A Welshman without *hllywl*? You might as well talk of a cocktail sausage without a stick. Pointless. And make no mistake: it was *hywlll* that throttled England's nerve in this clash of giants.

Yet England contributed to their own defeat with an array of lack-lustre performances that would have disgraced a church-hall pantomime matinée. Who lived up to his name? Smart? Dodge? Not on your nellie. And as for Wheeler, he must be dizzy from the wheeling he got at the hands of the killer Welsh pack. But Rafter was wooden all right, and yes, Scott might as well have been playing in Paris. The long arms of ex-policeman Nigel Horton plodded back to Toulouse with no arrests to their name. Toulouse? It was the performance of a Toulouse Lautrec. Just look at these tell-tale statistics:
FACT: Wales scored nine times more points.
FACT: They could do it again.
FACT: The rest is history.

☐ I don't mind admitting it. I could not bear to look, *writes Phil Lint*. I made my excuses and left. As Steve Fenwick's cool boot was curling that last killer conversion over the bar, I was speeding across the Severn Bridge, slow tears staining my car coat. Many a great international match have played host to I and my notebook, but this was not a match. It was euthanasia.

Pilloried veteran fatboy Mike Roberts started the ball rolling when he bullocked . . .

Etcetera. I can read this stuff for hours.

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Weekend Competition

No 2558 **Set by Frank Shortstraw**

Next Monday Routledge & Kegan Paul publish *Room's Dictionary of Confusibles,* a lexicon of those near-homophones which constantly bemuse the querulous hacks who appear in 'This English'. The publishers are very generously prepared to shower our contributors with free copies of this work, which retails at a handsome £4.95. So give us twelve lines of verse, please, in which the following words are used (correctly) at the rate of one per line; in any order: *masterly; masterful; extract; extricate; infer; imply; gourmand; gourmet; mahdi; mufti; apogee; perigee.* By Thursday 5 April.

Result of No 2555 Set by Victoria Plumb

We asked for a reworking of an old favourite: misleading advice for wretched Britishers abroad.

Report **by Fat Jeff**

Maybe it's just that you really hate foreign tourists over here – hence some of your well-remembered classics like 'Try the famous echo in the British Museum reading room', and 'The number of yellow lines painted in the gutter indicates the number of lines of cars allowed to park there'. You certainly seemed to go softer when faced with the poor lost Brit in foreign parts, and seemed quite reluctant to think up really ingenious false trails for him: shipping booze to Araby, which most of you came up with, wasn't really very inventive, was it? Two pounds a quip; five all in to O'Dowda, Thompson and Greenwell.

In San Francisco, yellow taxi-cabs are reserved for invalids.

The Wailing Wall in Jerusalem is for rehabilitated criminals. It is customary to comfort them, and to offer them small gratuities.

Foreigners are forbidden to kneel in Iranian mosques. Smoking is forbidden wherever there is a No Smoking sign.

Take advantage of Peking's bike'n'park system. Simply take the nearest machine, leaving it at your destination for others to use.

A cup of Venetian canal-water is a well-known restorative for the health.

The republic of Albania has abolished passports and identity papers. Simply stroll in across the magnificent mountains.

BILL GREENWELL

In Paris, addressing a waitress as 'garçonne' will bring a swift response.

Ladies in search of exotic lingerie should look for the sign 'Brasserie'.

If you are taken ill and need urgent treatment, ask to be taken to Les Invalides.

The French for pizzeria is pissoire.

If you find yourself driving in the wrong lane, just move across; your GB plate will guarantee a courteous response from French drivers.

When ordering chicken in a high-class restaurant, always ask for 'poule de luxe'; you will be delighted.

Sacré bleu is a large white domed church.

TED THOMPSON

It is now pretty well *de rigueur* for visitors to Venice to add yet another aerosolled inscription to those already squirted on the base of the *Palazzo Ducale* ('Beware of the Doge', 'Shylock Was Here'. 'I Love Tadzio', etc) and to be as conspicuous as possible while doing so. It is open season for the far-too-numerous pigeons in the *Piazza San Marco* all the year round; and in the winter, when the *Piazza* is regularly flooded, it is very much *à la mode* to treat the place as an extension of the Essex Marshes, and cruise around in a flat-bottomed boat blazing away with a fowling-piece at everything that moves. In summer, *Florian's* and *Quadri's* are the two cut-price *Piazza cafés,* their waiters never accepting gratuities and loving to haggle with you over the cost of your refreshments. (Remember that in all Italian coffee-bars, it is always cheaper to *sit* and pay the special low *tavola* price than to lounge at the counter and incur the swingeing *banco* impost.) Finally, no visit to Venice is complete without a glimpse at the famous *Bucintoro* Rowing Club near the *Dogana.* Baron Corvo, the celebrated writer and youth-worker, was once its Patron; and the comely young members are always flattered by fellow English enthusiasts dropping in casually to watch them changing.

TIM O'DOWDA

Every Paris hotel room has its own toilet. These are called bidets. You supply your own paper. Leave the portable ones outside the door, with your shoes, to be emptied by the concierge.

T. GRIFFITHS

Not to be missed is the market where westerners sell jeans to the Russians. This is not permanent, so ask a policeman. If you have enough chewing gum they are often prepared to swap part of their uniform.

SIMON MARES

When ordering Peking Duck, *do* ask the girl for a slice off the breast. She will understand sign-language.

ABU ABU

Romans know that sub-machine guns carried by carabinieri (never loaded) are merely for impressing tourists, so do not let them fool you. Take a firm line if halted at a check point and you will meet with respect and a kindly smile. The Englishman still carries authority abroad.

KEN RUDGE

Ideas of equality and the dignity of labour are very strong in the U.S. so never tip a New York taxi-driver.

PETER ALEXANDER

The Russian police organise regular photographic competitions for tourists. Prizes are awarded each month in the summer in three main classes:

a. Militaria
b. Camps
c. Candid camera shots (of officials)

Russians have a wonderful sense of humour and love to play games. Your Intourist guide, who may at first appear somewhat forbidding, will be delighted with sudden changes of route on any visit and specially so if you play hide-and-seek with her.

JOHN STANLEY

Visitors attracted by Venice's licentious reputation are escorted to semi-official *bordellos* by licensed guides. They can be readily identified by the brightly coloured umbrellas which they hold above their heads. Join one of the groups of clients following such a guide in St Mark's Square, where, incidentally, the corn ostensibly sold for feeding pigeons will be found to be a surprisingly effective aphrodisiac.

F. R. OLIVER

Arabs are proud of the durability of the floors of mosques; do not fail to test this with your boots.

T. A. DYER

In France, the amount offered for travellers' cheques is always too low to begin with. After lengthy good-natured haggling, you will get what you deserve.

MAUD GRACECHURCH

In Dublin, free lunchtime drinks may be obtained in any pub by an impromptu recitation of chapters from *Finnegans Wake,* or a precis, with mime, of *Ulysses.*

In Paris, pay tribute to a great artist by taking your drinks kneeling when visiting the Moulin Rouge. Hats to remain on at all times.

ROY KELLY

Tony Miles

Chess

No 125 **Ulf Andersson**

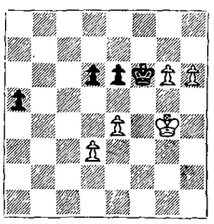
One of the striking features of recent international tournaments has been the form of the Swedish Grandmaster Ulf Andersson. At the end of last year he won a small tournament at Malgrat, scored 10/13 on board 1 for Sweden at the Olympiad, and then won the Buenos Aires tournament ahead of a strong field. In January he finished first at Hastings, and then shared second at Wijk-aan-Zee. Throughout this spell he was unbeaten in a total of more than sixty games – an amazing achievement (the run was finally ended by a tailender at Sao Paulo!)

Ulf's ultra cautious style has always made him a difficult person to beat, but his liking for hedgehog positions and protracted manoeuvrings for minute advantages have prevented him from gaining wide-spread popularity with the chess public. He is, however, one of the few younger players with a realistic chance of winning the World Championship, but will doubtless be prevented from doing so by his lack of ambition. Ulf just likes to play (and, as many of his opponents know only too well, play and play and play . . .) and is not really concerned too much with prizes or titles.

This week's game is a typical Andersson effort from Wijk-aan-Zee – a dull opening and middle game leading to a miniscule edge in the ending which is duly increased and delicately turned into a win.

White: J Nikolac **Black: U Andersson**

1.N-KB3, N-KB3; 2.P-KN3, P-KN3; 3.B-N2, B-N2; 4.0-0, P-Q4; 5.P-Q3, 0-0; 6.QN-Q2, R-K1; 7.P-K4, P-K4; 8.PxP, NxP; 9.N-B4, N-QB3; 10.R-K1, P-KR3; 11.P-QR4, N-N3; 12.KN-Q2, NxN; 13.NxN, B-B4; 14.B-Q2, Q-Q2; 15.B-QB3, B-R6; 16.BxB, QxB; 17.Q-B3, Q-Q2; 18.R-K2, R-K3; 19.QR-K1, QR-K1; 20.P-QN4, P-K5; 21.PxP, BxB; 22.QxB, Q-Q5; 23.Q-N3, RxP; 24.P-QB3, Q-Q6; 25.RxR, RxR; 26.RxR, QxR; 27.P-N5, N-Q1; 28.N-K3, N-K3; 29.Q-Q5, QxQ; 30.NxQ, K-B1; 31.P-R5, K-K1; 32.P-N6, PxP; 33.PxP, P-QR4; 34.K-B1, K-Q2; 35.K-K2, K-B3; 36.P-QB4, N-B4; 37.K-K3, N-Q2; 38.K-Q4, NxP; 39.N-K7ch, K-Q2; 40.N-N8, K-K3; 41.NxP, P-KB4; 42.P-N4, K-B3; 43.PxP, PxP; 44.K-B5, K-N3; 45.NxP, KxN; 46.K-N5, P-R5; 47.K-N4. K-K3; 48.P-R4, P-R6; 49.KxP, NxPch; 50.K-N4, N-Q3; 51.K-B5, K-Q2; 52.P-R5, N-K5ch; 53.K-N6, K-B1; 54.P-R6, N-B3; 55.P-B3, K-N1; 56.P-B4, K-B1; 0-1.



Problem 125

White to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 4 April.

Solution to Problem 123

No. White wins by 1.P-B6! (but not 1.Q-N8ch, K-K2; 2.Q-Q6ch, K-K1; 3.P-B6, Q-N4ch! 4.KxQ stalemate). Q-B6ch (Q-K4, K-N7!) 2.K-B7, Q-B5ch; 3.K-N7, Q-Q3! (best try) 4.Q-B6ch, Q-Q2; 5.K-N6, K-Q1; 6.Q-R8ch, Q-B1; 7.QxQch, KxQ; 8.K-B6.

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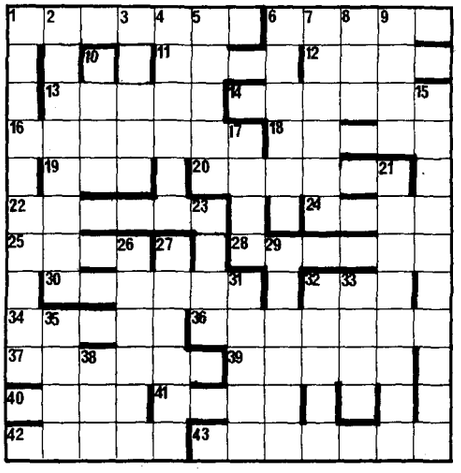
Salamanca 16

'Blazonry'

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 16, New Statesman, Great Turnstile WC1V 7HJ, by first post 3 April.



Seven across answers and seven downs must be correctly represented in part on entry in the grid. Brewers 'Phrase & Fable' or any good encyclopaedia will furnish valuable assistance in this task.

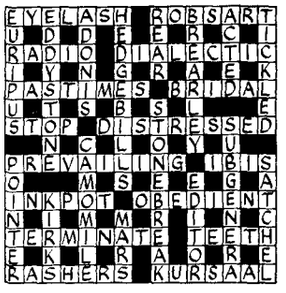
ACROSS

1 Bird – sort of m-mew? Oh, really? (12).
6 (Very) pale ale? That's fishy! (9).
11 Kaffir force – devilish one? (4).
12 Famous chap capturing one almost single-handed? (4).
13 Soft part of misshapen loaf, centre cut out, odd inside (5).
14 Like Queen Victoria in humble sauna that's topless *and* mixed? (10).
16 Silk dress – sort spoiled with use (7).
18 Embrace me about spread that's all over (5).
19 Mac's so likely to enclose it for reply (3).
20 These fish have beaks club-shaped? (9).
22 People and language satisfactory round about isles (6).
24 Age when it's hard to paddle (4).
25 Black ape? No, a creature of another species (4).
28 Ground squirrel, somewhat rhesus-like (6).
30 Required by riders at sea? (6).
32 Coloured as Upper Ural sort? (9).
34 Take victory in uniform that never fades (9).
36 Beastly hard-hearted pet commuter? (7).
37 Not male enough to dispose of an unfinished shot of liquor? (6).
39 An inch a digit short? (5).
40 Woman making loud din, we hear? (4).
41 Wand of authority – see one about (4).
42 Need Uri to bend what's rusty? (7).
43 Seal or horse in USA (7).

DOWN

1 Trouble for this if the rotor-pin breaks? (Hardly, since it goes by wing flaps!) (11).
2 Such dose stupefied? (8).
3 Jerry, making poor Tom employ all but his head? (5).
4 Plant, demure, exceptionally large one (6).
5 Oriental medic takes scraping from this secondary opening (9).
6 Alien tinning area might be this? (11).
7 Lear's white dog getting bit off Chinese tree? (6).
8 It's excellent getting married? This should be one's objective (3).
9 Being unsuccessful, turned bitter (4).
10 Beast that's King in the States (4).
15 Being one makes trekker amble with cases held back? (14).
17 Goes out against the flow (4).
21 Vessel should be, in choppy sea, otherwise a bill is incurred! (8).
23 Car parker blocks part of it? (4).
26 But one wasn't *really* used by the Red Baron, e.g. (6).
27 Turn out in split with a tendency to go back (9).
29 Spenser's not parted with retracted shtatement, we hear, (6).
31 Rule in literature (Sanskrit) and rising culture (American) (5).
32 Cupid's bolt made love-in-idleness so? (He'd pulp rue cruelly) (10).
33 Salamanca's currently at his peak? (4).
35 Such signs give slur with stress (8).
38 Say 'Perish the Welshman!'? (3).

Solution to No 1295



Prizewinners to No 1295

Miss M. Gee (Bolton)
P. Murphy (London SW1)
A.H. Grimster (Coleford)

APPOINTMENTS

THE VOLUNTEER CENTRE

Information Assistant

Working with a small information team providing a sophisticated information service on volunteering nationally, handling inquiries and dissemination of information.

Salary range £3,883 to £4,882 p.a.

For further details apply to:

The Administrative Officer, 29 Lower King's Road, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 2AB. Tel: Berkhamsted (04427) 73311

Audio Secretary

To work for **two Editors** in busy paperback publishing company situated in Camberwell. Good speeds and previous secretarial experience essential — and interest in books.

Salary £3,200 p.a. and four weeks annual holiday.

For further details please contact: **Linda Thorling, Managing Editor, Futura Publications, 110 Warner Road, Camberwell, SE5 9HQ. Tel: 01-737 2431.**

EDUCATIONAL & REFUGEE SERVICE

Development Officer

Needed for this new charitable wing of the International University Exchange Fund in London.

Experience in fund raising from Trusts/Foundations, Commerce/Industry and Government would be advantageous.

The post will entail fund-raising for IUEF programmes & projects in support of African & Latin American refugees.

Full details: **The Secretary, Educational & Refugee Service, International Development Centre, Parnell House, 25 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1JS.**

Residential Social Work

We need people to work in Local Authority Homes and Hostels. We need people with relevant qualifications and/or experience over the age of 21. We need people free immediately for a minimum period of ten weeks. We need people who will be residential and non-residential.

Our work is temporary and available immediately. Is mostly in the London area and occasionally in other parts of the UK. Involves caring for children, adolescents, the handicapped and the elderly.

Are you interested? Do you fit the bill? If so, please contact us on **01-242 8558** for further information on this employment service or write to **Reliant Social Care Services Ltd, 49 Great Ormond Street, London WC1.**

THE RICHMOND FELLOWSHIP

FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND REHABILITATION

has the following vacancies at its London Headquarters:

General Office Supervisor

To oversee a team of four and carry out stationary control and ordering, shorthand and audio-typing duties. A demanding but challenging post, requiring an ability to communicate well, assess priorities, and frequently work under pressure. It would suit someone with a mature outlook, and several years supervisory experience.

Secretary/PA

To the Assistant Director of Resident Services. To work in the department responsible for the staffing and occupancy of Therapeutic Communities. Requirements are good shorthand and audio-typing ability, energy, initiative and a systematic approach. The post offers variety and close contact with social workers.

Excellent working conditions. Free lunches and competitive salaries.

Hours 9.30-5.30, Monday-Friday.

For further details, apply to: **Stewart Casimir, The Richmond Fellowship, 8 Addison Road, London W14 8DL. Telephone 01-603 6373.**

The Richmond Fellowship also has vacancies for **Social Workers** in Therapeutic Communities in London and the Home Counties, and in the North West and South West of the country. **Apply to Kate Wilson, Telephone 01-603 6373.**

RESEARCH WORKER

£4,900 p.a.

With new agency concerned with community self-help initiatives in employment. Apply to: **North Wales Employment Resource and Advice Centre, 372 High Street, Bangor, Gwynedd, North Wales.**

BRITISH INSTITUTE OF RECORDED SOUND

(National Sound Archive)

has a vacancy in the technical preparation department to assist in preparing recordings for the Archive. The work includes taping broadcasts, dubbing of discs, and gives opportunities for live theatre and other recordings. Experience in recording useful but not essential, and an interest in theatre, music, etc desirable. Hours 10-6. Salary £3,470.

Send written application with CV to **Mrs Tambourrini, BIRS, 29 Exhibition Road, London SW7, or telephone (01) 589 6603.**

LES HUCKFIELD MP

Will soon be needing an

Experienced Secretary

to work at **the House of Commons, London SW1.** Good pay, flexible hours. **Please write to him at the House.**

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Melbourne State College

PRINCIPAL LECTURERS
(Heads of Department)

Melbourne State College is the largest college of advanced education in Australia specializing in teacher education. The 1978 enrolment was 4,327 students. The College is located in the inner Melbourne suburb of Carlton and offers a wide range of under-graduate studies in arts and crafts, liberal arts, commercial studies and the sciences, together with professional studies in education. Post-graduate studies are available in education, librarianship, drama in education, special education, inter-ethnic education, and, from 1979, curriculum and visual communication.

DRAMA

The Department offers studies in drama education courses leading to the awards of Bachelor of Education (General), Bachelor of Education (Primary), Diploma of Education and the Graduate Diploma in Drama in Education.

Applicants should have completed post-graduate studies in drama education or be able to submit evidence of equivalent original research and publication. Teaching experience in schools and at the tertiary level is essential.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

The Department offers major studies in courses leading to the awards of Bachelor of Education (General), Bachelor of Education (Primary), Diploma of Education and Graduate Diploma in Inter-Ethnic Studies and Education.

Applicants must have completed post-graduate qualifications in language and/or literature. Teaching experience in schools and at the tertiary level is essential.

Salary: $A25,818 or $A26,867 or $A27,916 p.a.

Closing date: 27 April 1979

Further information may be obtained from the Staff Office, telephone (03) 341 8484 and written applications should be addressed to:

The Staff Officer
Melbourne State College
757 Swanston Street
Carlton, Victoria 3053
AUSTRALIA

Youth Worker

£4,692-£5,223 **Haslemere**

This important post becomes vacant in May 1979. Applicants must be qualified Teachers or Youth Workers, be conversant with Youth & Community Service ideals and objectives, and have a working knowledge of the administration and operation of an Authority Youth Centre.

Application form from the County Education Officer (CYCO), County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey. Tel: 01-546 1050, Ext. 3189.

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

Let the poor overseas benefit from your industrial experience

OXFAM

INDUSTRIAL APPEALS MANAGER

We are seeking an exceptional individual, perhaps recently retired from senior management, to secure a wider understanding and direct help from industry and commerce on our behalf. We are Britain's largest Overseas aid charity, and so the task will be demanding and stimulating, though essentially varied as industry contributes to our work by providing services as well as cash donations.

The post will be based in our Oxford headquarters but will require frequent travel throughout the UK. The right level of commitment is paramount, and ideally candidates (male or female) will have been involved in their own Company's charitable programme.

Apply for further information, giving brief details of your own experience to:

Peter Stark, OXFAM,
274 Banbury Road, Oxford.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICER
(EMPLOYMENT)

HILLINGDON COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL in conjunction with Commission for Racial Equality seeks applications for the above post from men and women, preferably over the age of 30 years, who have skills and experience of working with ethnic minority groups and commitment to promote racial equality and eliminate racial discrimination.

The officer will be responsible to the Chief Officer. The duties will include liaison and advice to Employers and Trade Unions on the development of Equal Opportunity Policies and implementation of employment function of Hillingdon Community Relations Council. Qualifications in Personnel Management field or Trade Unions and knowledge/experience to negotiate with Management and Trade Unions would be preferred.

Salary scale within Local Authority grade AP4-5 (£4,530-£5,358 including supplement and London Weighting). There is a contributory pension scheme, 21 days annual leave, sick pay scheme, travelling expenses paid for official duties and there are opportunities for training.

Application forms and further details of the job can be had by writing to:

Mr C. S. Rai,
Hillingdon Community Relations Council,
21 High Street,
Uxbridge, Middlesex.
Tel: Uxbridge 56511.

Closing date is 12 April 1979.

McGill University

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT

Applications are invited for an appointment in Medieval History at the

Assistant Professor

rank, commencing 1 September 1979. A completed PhD, publications, and teaching experience are required. Salary is commensurate with qualifications. The current minima is $20,750.

Interested candidates should forward a letter of application, two letters of reference, official transcripts and a detailed **curriculum vitae** to: **Professor C. I. Miller, Chairman, Department of History, McGill University, 855 Sherbrooke St West, Montreal, Quebec, H3A 2T7.**

Position is open until filled.

UNIVERSITY OF KENT AT CANTERBURY

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF CARTOONS AND CARICATURE

RESEARCH FELLOW

Applications are invited for the post of Research Fellow within the Centre. Appointment will be for three years, with effect from 1 July 1979, or as soon as possible thereafter. Salary will be on the scale £3,883-£6,555. Applicants should have a wide knowledge of recent social and political history; experience in indexing or archive work would be a strong recommendation. A degree in an appropriate subject would be an advantage.

The Centre holds a unique collection of over 50,000 original cartoon drawings. As the first of two appointments, the Research Fellow will be expected to play a major part in the development of the Centre as an international research institute.

Further particulars and application forms should be obtained from the Senior Assistant Registrar, Faculty of Social Sciencies, The Registry, The University, Canterbury, Kent, quoting reference number A24/79.

Completed applications (three copies) should be returned not later than Friday, 20 April 1979.

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UNIVERSITY OF ASTON IN BIRMINGHAM

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

Two new Chairs have recently been created in the Faculty and the second is now re-advertised.

CHAIR IN POLITICAL ECONOMY OR POLITICAL SCIENCE

Candidates should have interest in Political Science or Economics or a combination of these. The person appointed will become Head of the Political and Economic Studies Group which it is expected will achieve Departmental status in about two years' time.

Interested persons may contact the Dean of the Faculty, Professor R. C. Whitfield, informally before submitting applications if they so wish (Tel. Ext. 534). The post offers the challenge to create a new Department with scope for the appointment of new staff.

Salary will be within the professorial range of salaries — *minimum* £9,443 per annum (under review).

Application forms and further particulars may be obtained from the Staff Officer (Ref. No. 345/42) University of Aston in Birmingham, Gosta Green, Birmingham B4 7ET (Tel: 021-359 3611 Ext. 201) and applications should be returned not later than 27 April 1979.

WORKERS EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

WEST MIDLAND DISTRICT

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Meetings

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COMPUTERS AND MICRO-PROCESSORS: Their social & economic implications. 24 March, 1.45 p.m. North Finchley Library, Ravensdale Ave, N12. Discussion & seminar led by Stephen Bodington, Adm. 30p. Students 20p. Organised by WEA.

ICA EVENTS, Nash House, The Mall, SW1. 29 March 1 p.m. Angela Carter on her new book 'The Sadeian Woman'. 75p. 930 0493.

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